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# A HISTORY, ANALYSIS, AND PERFORMANCE GUIDE TO SAMUEL BARBER'S CANZONETTA FOR OBOE AND STRING ORCHESTRA

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Dr. Michael Baker, Director of Graduate Studies

# A HISTORY, ANALYSIS, AND PERFORMANCE GUIDE TO SAMUEL BARBER'S CANZONETTA FOR OBOE AND STRING ORCHESTRA

D.M.A./Musical Arts Project

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts in the College of Fine Arts at the University of Kentucky

By

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Lexington, Kentucky

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Lexington, Kentucky

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#### ABSTRACT OF D.M.A./MUSICAL ARTS PROJECT

# A HISTORY, ANALYSIS, AND PERFORMANCE GUIDE TO SAMUEL BARBER'S CANZONETTA FOR OBOE AND STRING ORCHESTRA

This dissertation examines Samuel Barber's Canzonetta for Oboe and String Orchestra, which was intended to be the central movement of an oboe concerto commissioned by the New York Philharmonic. The Canzonetta for Oboe and String Orchestra is representative of Barber's tendency towards vocal lyricism and neoromantic tonality, serving as a representation of his compositional style. This document will explore the technical and expressive demands found in Barber's writing for the oboe and will offer solutions for any problematic elements—including those specific to the oboe itself. It will also suggest practice techniques for the execution of these difficulties. This dissertation is comprised of an overview of the existing literature, followed by a biography, introduction to the composer, and a history of the work to contextualize the piece for interested performers. A formal theoretical analysis will be included, as well as a detailed performance guide, offering the author's suggestion for a cadenza and a guide to interpretation.

KEYWORDS: Oboe, Samuel Barber, Canzonetta for Oboe and String Orchestra, Performance Guide, Oboe and Strings

Angela Christine Sallas
April 24, 2017
Date

# A HISTORY, ANALYSIS, AND PERFORMANCE GUIDE TO SAMUEL BARBER'S CANZONETTA FOR OBOE AND STRING ORCHESTRA

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April 24, 2017 Date To my fiancé, for always encouraging me and loving me no matter how difficult the work became or how long the hours were. To my family, for their continued love, support, and patience. To Dr. ToniMarie Marchioni, for seeing potential where I did not and for her always excellent advice. To the UK Oboe Studio, for their enthusiasm and humor.

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Finally, special thanks to my editor Katie Waddell for all of her help and to my family and friends; thank you for reading and editing, and for offering advice and encouragement. And to Josh: without you, I would have quit a long time ago.

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# **Chapter One: Introduction and Background**

Discussions of American music of the twentieth century often begin with a focus either on the desire to create a distinctly "American" style of concert music or on the innovative, radical ideas leading to the development of the twelve-tone style—for example, the use of electronics and minimalism. The so-called "crisis of tonality" at the turn of the century maintained that traditional nineteenth century tonality had reached the limit of its potential, and the only way forward was to explore radical new paths. Those composers that continued to rely heavily upon traditionalist tonal language while still embracing the standard forms of the nineteenth century were often viewed with a certain amount of disdain and contempt. The popularity and mass appeal of their works often became a reason for proponents of the new, modernist styles to dismiss them outright. These composers—known as "neo-romantics" due to their numerous shared characteristics with music of the Romantic era—wrote music that was expressive and tonally adventurous, while still adhering to the musical traditions of the nineteenth century.

American composer Samuel Barber, often grouped with these so-called neoromantics, was one of the most popular and frequently performed composers of the twentieth century. Rarely participating in the experimental trends and procedures of his contemporaries, Barber only used these new techniques when they did not interfere with his straight-forward tonality and lyricism. Prominent Barber historian Barbara Heyman notes that in spite of his traditionalist approach, it was his use of "post-Straussian chromaticism along with a typically American directness and simplicity" that helped give

his style its "lasting strength." Main characteristics of Barber's works include his use of vocal lyricism and a traditional sense of tonality. Heyman describes this aspect of his style, exemplified in many of his large scale orchestral works, as having a rich orchestral palette "characterized by well-crafted formal design, fluent counterpoint, and haunting themes—often assigned to solo woodwind instruments—that reflect a strong vocal orientation."

After Barber's long and illustrious career as a composer of orchestral and vocal works, his final composition was a planned oboe concerto, only the second movement of which was completed. By the time he began work on this piece, Barber had been diagnosed with cancer and was hospitalized intermittently for the remainder of his life. Knowing the slow middle movement of the planned piece could be independent, Barber renamed it first Andante for Oboe and Orchestra, and later in 1980 suggested it be called *Canzonetta for Oboe and String Orchestra*. Representative of Barber's tendency towards vocal lyricism and neo-romantic tonality, this work serves as a snapshot of his overall style and will be examined in greater detail in this document.

This document explores the technical and expressive demands found in Barber's writing for the oboe and offers solutions for any problematic elements, presenting the author's interpretation of the work with options for a short cadenza. To approach the *Canzonetta for Oboe and String Orchestra*, the author will give an introduction and overview of the topic with an examination of the existing literature, followed by three chapters grouped as follows: a brief biography of Samuel Barber and a history of the

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Barbara Heyman, "Barber, Samuel," *Oxford Music Online*, accessed 30 November 2015, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.uky.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/01994.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Barbara Heyman, *Samuel Barber: The Composer and His Music*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 506-507.

piece and its composition, a formal analysis of the work, and finally a performance guide designed to assist oboists of all skill levels. The purpose here is to contextualize this work historically and provide an accessible overview of this piece, complete with interpretive suggestions and technical solutions for the performer.

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# **Chapter Two: Overview of Existing Literature**

Musicologist and author of Samuel Barber: A Research and Information Guide,
Wayne Wentzel, observes that there are few substantial studies of Barber's life and
works. Despite some recent publications, only two biographies exist currently: one from
1954 by Nathan Broder (Samuel Barber) and one more recent biography by Barbara
Heyman from 1992 (Samuel Barber: The Composer and His Music). According to
Wentzel, most articles about Barber that appear in newspapers or periodicals are quite
general, and many scholarly articles are adaptations of their respective author's
dissertation or thesis work. It should be understood then that the state of scholarship
dealing with any specific aspect of Barber's music in regard to the oboe is almost nonexistent. In fact, the only scholarly article that could be found relating to Barber's use of
the oboe appeared in The Double Reed, Vol. V, No. 1 (April, 1982), on the Canzonetta
for Oboe and String Orchestra, Op. 48. This article provides a reprint of program notes
written by John Corigliano without any additional information about the piece, other than
noting details of its premiere.

Even in a general sense, Samuel Barber does not appear in scholarly texts as often as one might expect for a composer of his importance and renown. His life and music incurred minimal discussion in books on twentieth century music from the 1990s, with just one page in Norman Lebrecht's 1996 *The Companion to 20<sup>th</sup> Century Music* and in the 2013 reprint of *Encyclopedia of Music in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* edited by Lee Stacy and Lol Henderson. General music encyclopedias give equally sparse treatment of his life and

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Wayne Wentzel, Samuel Barber: A Research and Information Guide, (London: Routledge, 2001), 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> John Corigliano, "A New Work for Oboe by Samuel Barber," *The Double Reed Journal*, 5, No. 1 (March 1982), Accessed 1 December 2015, http://www.idrs.org/publications/controlled/DR/DR5.1/barber.html.

work, as Grove Music Online's brief article written by Barber scholar Barbara Heyman shows.

Heyman's biography of the composer, Samuel Barber: The Man and His Music, and her thematic catalogue of his works, Samuel Barber: A Thematic Catalogue of the Complete Works, offer the most comprehensive survey of Barber's compositional output. These two volumes have helped to establish Heyman as the foremost Barber scholar in the musicological world today. The amount of information provided, particularly in the thematic catalogue, is extraordinary. Each piece contains musical incipits, text if applicable, information on premieres and instrumentation, and some information on the original inspiration for the work. Both of her works are extremely valuable resources for any research on Samuel Barber and his music.

In more recent years, two newer books on twentieth-century music offer more coverage of Barber and his compositional output. *Masterworks of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Music*, written by Douglas Lee in 2002, a musicologist specializing in modern orchestral music and music of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, devotes nearly twenty pages to Barber and many of his works. Later, in 2004, Walter Simmons published *Voices in the Wilderness: Six American Neo-Romantic Composers*. Simmons, a musicologist specializing in the music of twentieth-century traditionalist composers, includes an overview of Samuel Barber's life and work, including stylistic features, in a substantial eighty page chapter complete with endnotes and a selected bibliography and discography.

Some previously published dissertations serve as useful resources for modes of organization and research techniques dealing with similar topics. Several published within the last fifty years discuss Samuel Barber's life and works, but none specifically

focus attention on the *Canzonetta for Oboe and String Orchestra*. There are close to fifty dissertations available in ProQuest that are primarily concerned with some aspect of Samuel Barber and his works, and even more that reference the composer, though not as the main topic of exploration.

Within this smaller group, eight dissertations either approach the use of specific woodwind instruments in Barber's output or address one of his other works. Among these are three that specifically discuss the use of woodwinds: Hollie Jo Grosklos's work on *Summer Music*, Abigail Kegel Walsh's discussion of the flute in the twentieth century woodwind quintet, and Lori Lynn Wooden's overview of woodwind quintet music excerpts for bassoon. Five other dissertations mention works with different instrument combinations and other pieces, including Jason Allen Crafton's guide for trumpet to the *Capricorn Concerto*, Paul Murray Hayden's discussion of the use of tonality in concertos by American composers, Emily Lu's work on Barber's Piano Concerto, 2

Jessica Kenzie Hunter Platt's study of his Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 14, 13

and Yoon-Jung Song's analysis of his Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 38. 14

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Hollie Jo Grosklos, "Form and lyricism as elements of neo-Romanticism in "Summer Music" Op. 31 by Samuel Barber (1957), with three recitals of selected works by Bach, Mozart, Hindemith, Handel, Gaubert, and others," (Dissertation, University of North Texas, 2001).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Abigail Kegel Walsh, "The flute in American twentieth century woodwind quintet repertoire: A practical discussion of excerpts from works by Barber, Carter, Fine, Harbison and Schuller," (Dissertation, University of Hartford, 2010).

Lori Lynn Wooden, "Excerpts of woodwind quintet music for bassoon: Selections, pedagogy, and practice," (Dissertation, The University of Wisconsin - Madison, 1996).
 Jason Allen Crafton, "A Trumpeter's Guide to Samuel Barber's "Capricorn Concerto"," (Dissertation,

Jason Allen Crafton, "A Trumpeter's Guide to Samuel Barber's "Capricorn Concerto"," (Dissertation, University of North Texas, 2010).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Paul Murray Hayden, "The Use of Tonality in Four Concertos by American Composers," (Dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1982).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Emily Lu, "The "Piano Concerto" of Samuel Barber," (Dissertation, The University of Wisconsin - Madison, 1986).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Jessica Kinzie Hunter Platt, "A methodology of study for Samuel Barber's Concerto for Violin and Orchestra Op. 14," (Dissertation, Ball State University, 2009).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Yoon-Jung Song, "A style analysis of Samuel Barber's Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 38," (Dissertation, University of Hartford, 2004).

Many of the above-referenced dissertations examine specific compositions from a pedagogical perspective, with their approach often tailored to the primary instrument (for instance, pedagogy of the solo violin part in the Violin Concerto or the solo piano part in the Piano Concerto). Others take a purely analytical perspective on a specific piece in Barber's repertoire, and some observe the use of one of the instruments in the woodwind quintet (in this case, the use of flute and bassoon) across a specific era, such as the twentieth century, or across a few selected composers.

Grosklos's dissertation from 2001 on form and lyricism in neo-Romanticism looks specifically at *Summer Music*—a work for woodwind quintet—to explore these elements, as well as to compare the manuscript and the published edition. <sup>15</sup> Her research discusses a specific analytical category Barber is sometimes associated with—the neoromantic style. Jason Allen Crafton offers a performer's guide to the solo trumpet part of the *Capricorn Concerto*, providing historical background and examining numerous recordings in order assist the performer in his dissertation *A Trumpeter's Guide to Samuel Barber's "Capricorn Concerto."* Crafton also references another dissertation from 1957, Russell Friedewald's *A Formal and Stylistic Analysis of the Published Music of Samuel Barber*, as a useful resource for his own work on the *Capricorn Concerto*.

The organization of Crafton's work on the *Capricorn Concerto* inspired the format of this document, beginning with background information on the work and its historical context and then moving to an analysis of the work and information for the performer. Many of the sources used in the above dissertations were also consulted for information about the composer and the characteristics of his style in order to write the

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Hollie Jo Grosklos, "Form and lyricism as elements of neo-Romanticism in "Summer Music" Op. 31 by Samuel Barber (1957), with three recitals of selected works by Bach, Mozart, Hindemith, Handel, Gaubert, and others," (Dissertation, University of North Texas, 2001).

short biography. They also provided a point of departure for research and finding additional sources that could be useful in the following document.

# **Chapter Three: Biography of the Composer**

Born in West Chester, Pennsylvania in 1910 into an affluent family with the means and enthusiasm to help him pursue his musical dreams, Samuel Barber seemed destined for a life as a composer from an early age. Having the somewhat unusual distinction of being able to support himself almost completely with composition for most of his career, Barber enjoyed a success rarely seen among composers. Music critic for the *New York Times* Donald Henahan wrote of Barber, "Probably no other American composer has ever enjoyed such early, such persistent, and such long-lasting acclaim." <sup>16</sup>

A talented young musician from a musical family, Barber began his music career early, writing his first composition for piano at age seven (*Sadness*) and his first opera at age ten (*The Rose Tree*). Of great influence on Barber's early affinity for music and much of his compositional style were his uncle and aunt, the composer Sidney Homer and the famed contralto Louise Homer, respectively. His uncle often counseled and advised the young Barber, recommending that he use the giants of the nineteenth century as role models while still attempting to "trust the validity of his 'inner voice." His compositional style took other influences from his formal music education, which consisted of the traditional and European-oriented training he received in his nine years at the newly founded Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia in addition to his travels to Europe and subsequent fascination with European culture.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Donald Henahan, "Samuel Barber, Composer, Dead; Twice Winner of Pulitzer Prize," *The New York Times*, 24 January 1981, Accessed 1 March 2017, http://www.nytimes.com/1981/01/24/obituaries/samuelbarber-composer-dead-twice-winner-of-pulitzer-prize.html?scp=5&sq=%22Samuel+Barber%22&st=nyt.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Barbara Heyman, *Samuel Barber: The Composer and His Music*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Ibid.

The main characteristics of Barber's style have always centered on his use of vocal lyricism and a traditional nineteenth century use of tonality. Developed early on, Barber's style rarely deviated to encompass other compositional trends of the time. In fact, Barber believed the "constant search for something new inhibited many composers"<sup>20</sup> and always trusted strongly in his own compositional voice. Near the end of his life in an interview with John Gruen in the New York Times, Barber spoke openly about his compositional style and process, observing of his style "...it is said that I have no style at all but that doesn't matter. I just go on doing, as they say, my thing. I believe this takes a certain courage."21 Of his process he remarked

...that one of the physical nurturing components that make my music sound as it does is that I live mostly in the country. I like being surrounded by nature. I have always believed that I need a circumference of silence. As to what happens when I compose, I really haven't the faintest idea....It seems to me that the most practical thing is simply to write your music in the way you want to write it. Then you go out and find the interpreters who will give it voice.<sup>22</sup>

Barber's early success in his career and continued popularity throughout his life was indebted to this accessible and melodically driven style, highly appealing to American audiences that often did not understand or enjoy new avant-garde trends. Following early performances by Toscanini and the NBC Symphony Orchestra of his First Essay for Orchestra and Adagio for Strings, nearly all of his works were composed on commission

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Douglas Lee, "Samuel Barber" in Masterworks of 20th Century Music, (London: Routledge, 2002), 8. <sup>21</sup> John Gruen, "And Where Has Samuel Barber Been?" The New York Times, 3 October 1971, Accessed 1 March 2017, http://www.nytimes.com/1971/10/03/archives/and-where-has-samuel-barber-been-where-hassamuel-barber-been.html?\_r=0.

for particular famous performers or ensembles.<sup>23</sup> As Barber said, "Performers have always helped me."<sup>24</sup>

His popularity and status as one of the most frequently performed American composers of his time soon spread internationally; often chosen to represent America abroad, Barber served as vice president of the International Music Council in 1952 and was the first American composer at the biennial Congress of Soviet Composers in Moscow in 1962. Barber was also the recipient of two Pulitzer prizes later in his career, as well as two Bearns awards: one for a lost violin sonata and the other for his *Overture to "The School for Scandal*," his first published large-scale orchestral work.

Barber's musical style post-1940s did evolve to incorporate some elements of modernism, including an increased use of chromaticism and dissonance, more ambiguity in tonal centers, and a very limited use of serialism. However, his main concern always centered on writing music that would be accessible to a broad audience. Two of his best-known works reflect his fondness for long, expressive melodies: the *Adagio for Strings* and the Violin Concerto. Heyman describes this aspect of his style, exemplified in many of his large scale orchestral works, as having a rich orchestral palette "characterized by well-crafted formal design, fluent counterpoint, and haunting themes—often assigned to solo woodwind instruments—that reflect a strong vocal orientation." Many of his contemporaries, concerned with creating an "American" musical style, incorporated popular, jazz, and even folk idioms into their music. Barber very rarely used these

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Barbara Heyman, "Barber, Samuel" *Oxford Index*, Accessed 30 November 2015, http://oxfordindex.oup.com/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.01994.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> John Gruen, "And Where Has Samuel Barber Been?" *The New York Times*, Accessed 1 March 2017, http://www.nytimes.com/1971/10/03/archives/and-where-has-samuel-barber-been-where-has-samuel-barber-been.html? r=0.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Barbara Heyman, "Barber, Samuel" *Oxford Index*, Accessed 30 November 2015, http://oxfordindex.oup.com/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.01994.

stylistic influences in his own works, remaining centered in 19<sup>th</sup> century classical traditions; the "American" influence in Barber's style manifests in his music's directness and simplicity.<sup>26</sup>

The last ten to fifteen years of Barber's life were marred by a number of struggles with depression, alcoholism, and creative blocks. Following the rather unsuccessful premiere of his opera *Antony and Cleopatra*, he began to be plagued more and more by these so called "dry spells." The lack of success of this particular work is frequently cited as a catalyst for problems in the final years of his career. Commonly described as somewhat burdened by his early success, Barber struggled with perfectionism and the gaps in creation seen in his later compositional output. His longtime friend and partner Gian Carlo Menotti describes this tendency thus:

He was so gifted, but actually he was a very tormented soul. He was never happy with what he had done. He was only happy while he was composing. When he finished a piece, he could not bear to look at it. When he had to correct something, it was truly agony for him to go over a piece. And he also suffered a great deal because he went through long periods of dryness. But once he'd gotten into a piece, he would work day and night without stopping.<sup>27</sup>

In the late 1970s, Barber was diagnosed with multiple myeloma and began chemotherapy treatments during a flurry of hospitalizations. Following a stroke that served as a significant setback in September of 1980, his health continued to decline. He spent the last several months of his life at his home and University Hospital, surrounded by friends and by music until his death on January 23, 1981.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Ibid

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Barbara Heyman, *Samuel Barber: The Composer and His Music*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 461.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Ibid, 506 and 508.

# History of the Piece

Samuel Barber's final composition, orchestrated posthumously by Charles Turner, was the Canzonetta for Oboe and String Orchestra, Op. 48. Originally intended as the middle movement of an oboe concerto, the piece was the result of a 1978 commission by the New York Philharmonic. Francis Goelet, a philanthropist and longtime supporter of music and the arts, gifted the symphony with funds intended to produce a series of works for solo orchestral instruments. The *Canzonetta* was premiered by former principal oboist of the New York Philharmonic Harold Gomberg—a former classmate of Barber's at the Curtis Institute of Music—for his farewell performance.<sup>29</sup> This premiere performance took place on December 17, 1981 at Avery Fisher Hall in New York, with the New York Philharmonic under the direction of Zubin Mehta. <sup>30</sup> Gomberg also played a cadenza that Barber had written for him at the premiere performance, which Turner did not include in the score and which does not appear in the published edition.<sup>31</sup>

Soon after completing his *Third Essay for Orchestra* and during subsequent work on its orchestration, Barber began work on the planned oboe concerto, completing the middle movement in the fall and winter of 1978. Barber decided to start with this lyrical slow movement in part because writing long, elegant melodies came easiest to him. When he was diagnosed with cancer, it soon became clear that he would not be able to finish the piece. However, knowing that it could stand on its own, Barber suggested the title Canzonetta for Oboe and String Orchestra. Barber's colleague Charles Turner, a

http://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/7bd62608-ea13-4b77-9ce8-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Ibid, 506.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> John Corigliano, ""Canzonetta" for Oboe and String Orchestra, Op. 48 (Posth.)," program notes for Samuel Barber's Canzonetta for Oboe and String Orchestra, The New York Philharmonic with conductor Zubin Mehta, New York: Avery Fisher Hall, 17 December 1981, 18-19,

<sup>1</sup>ae2f0521995/fullview#page/2/mode/2up.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Barbara Heyman, Samuel Barber: The Composer and His Music, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 507.

longtime friend and former student, would later orchestrate the piece in October of 1981. In the 1993 edition of the work for oboe and piano, Turner writes,

'I like to give my best themes to the oboe,' said Sam Barber. This *Canzonetta* for oboe and strings was meant to be the slow movement of an oboe concerto commissioned by the New York Philharmonic, but soon after Sam began it in 1978, his doctor told him he had cancer. The other two movements were never written – nor was anything else – before he died in 1981. In this Canzonetta we find the form of Sam's life imitating that of his art by making a simple final statement and farewell.<sup>32</sup>

Historian and Barber specialist Barbara Heyman calls the *Canzonetta* an "appropriate elegy to the conclusion of Barber's career." With his ease in writing for the oboe and the vocally inspired thread running throughout this and many of his other important works, this piece provides a simple and elegant example of Barber's musical style.<sup>33</sup>

Before the premiere of the work, Charles Turner created a small amount of turmoil by publicly protesting a modification that oboist Harold Gomberg attempted involving a register change to make the oboe more prominent; Turner actually went so far as to call the New York Times to complain about the change. Due to the controversy, conductor Zubin Mehta ended up restoring the original version.<sup>34</sup> The performance met with modest praise, with New York Times music critic John Rockwell calling the concert "an interesting program, by and large well played." Described later as "sweet and modestly luxurious in its lyricism" and "graceful, passionate, and poetic," the Canzonetta

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Samuel Barber, Canzonetta for Oboe and String Orchestra, Oboe and Piano, (New York: G. Schirmer, Inc., 1993).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Barbara Heyman, Samuel Barber: The Composer and His Music, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 507.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> John Rockwell, "Philharmonic: 4 Pieces by Modern Composers," *The New York Times*, 20 December 1981, Accessed 1 March 2017, http://www.nytimes.com/1981/12/20/arts/philharmonic-4-pieces-bymodern-composers.html.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Barbara Heyman, *Samuel Barber: The Composer and His Music*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 507.

# **Chapter Four: Formal Analysis of the Work**

One of the key features of Barber's musical style is the contrast between "post-Straussian chromaticism and an oft-diatonic, typically American simplicity," as indicated by John Corigliano in his program notes on this work. Corigliano is referencing the dichotomy between Barber scores like *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* and "Sure on This Shining Night" with those like the Piano Sonata and *Andromache's Farewell*; the former he calls mostly simple and unadorned, while the latter feature extreme chromaticism. A unique feature of the *Canzonetta* is the blending and intermingling of these two contrasting styles within the same melodic and developmental material.

Corigliano points out that these two different styles, when appearing in the same piece, typically deal with vastly different material; for instance, there might be 'chromatic melodies and developments' and 'diatonic melodies and developments,' but they would not coalesce. By contrast, the *Canzonetta* features one simple, meandering melodic line that exchanges between a strictly diatonic version and a highly chromatic and rhythmically transformed version. The edition of this piece used in the following analysis is the version arranged for oboe and piano, copyright 1993 by G. Schirmer, Inc. An understanding of the features of harmony, melodic contours, formal structure, and rhythm in the *Canzonetta* will help the performer arrive at informed interpretive decisions which enhance the performance itself.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> Barbara Heyman, *Samuel Barber: The Composer and His Music*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 507.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> John Corigliano, "'Canzonetta' for Oboe and String Orchestra, Op. 48 (Posth.)," *New York Philharmonic*, 19, http://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/7bd62608-ea13-4b77-9ce8-1ae2f0521995/fullview#page/2/mode/2up.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Barber, Canzonetta for Oboe and String Orchestra, Oboe and Piano.

# Formal Structure

The form of this piece is defined primarily by the alternation between two main sections—one simple and diatonic, the other increasingly complex and chromatic—with two separate introductions for each of these sections and a short coda. Though this work does not fit perfectly into a single form, it most closely resembles a type of song form usually represented as AABA. Because of Barber's reputation as a brilliant composer of vocal music and experience as a gifted singer himself, the use of song forms in his other works is common. The *Canzonetta* can be said to follow a modified song form, written as follows: AA'BA''B(A). The following table in Figure 4.1 describes the form, in addition to key areas and introductory material.

| E-flat | A                  | Intro 1 | Phrase A  | Phrase  | Phrase   | Phrase | Phrase |
|--------|--------------------|---------|-----------|---------|----------|--------|--------|
| Major  |                    | m. 1-8  | m.7-14    | В       | A'       | C      | D      |
|        | m. 138             |         |           | m. 14-  | m.20-    | m.26-  | m. 31- |
|        |                    |         |           | 20      | 26       | 31     | 38     |
| E-flat | A'                 |         | Phrase A  | Phrase  | Phrase   | Phrase |        |
| Major  |                    |         | m. 38-45  | В       | A'       | С      |        |
|        | m. 38-59           |         |           | m. 44-  | m. 50-   | m. 55- |        |
|        |                    |         |           | 50      | 55       | 59     |        |
| v7/V   | Transition/Cadenza |         |           |         |          |        |        |
| to V   | m. 59-62           |         |           |         |          |        |        |
| E-flat | В                  | Intro 2 | Phrase a  | Phrase  | Intro 2' |        |        |
|        | _                  | m. 63-  | m. 69-73  | ь       | m. 77-   |        |        |
|        | m. 63-84           | 69      |           | m. 73-  | 84       |        |        |
|        |                    |         |           | 77      |          |        |        |
| E-flat | A''                | Intro 1 | Phrase A  | Phrase  | Phrase   |        |        |
| Major  |                    | m. 84-  | m. 89-96  | В       | A'       |        |        |
|        | m. 84-106          | 91      |           | m. 96-  | m. 102-  |        |        |
|        |                    |         |           | 103     | 106      |        |        |
| E-flat | В                  | Intro   | Phrase a  | Phrase  |          |        |        |
|        | _                  | 2'      | m. 113-   | b       |          |        |        |
|        | m. 107-121         | m.      | 117       | m. 117- |          |        |        |
|        |                    | 107-    |           | 121     |          |        |        |
|        |                    | 113     |           |         |          |        |        |
| E-flat | Coda               | Intro 1 | Ext Final |         |          |        |        |
| Major  |                    | m.      | Cadence   |         |          |        |        |
|        | m. 121-133         | 121-    | m. 128-   |         |          |        |        |
| E: 4   | 1.5 1.6 (          | 128     | 133       | 1.0.    | 0.1      |        |        |

Figure 4.1 Formal Structure of Canzonetta for Oboe and String Orchestra

Section A above is firmly within E-flat major, while Section B uses E-flat as a tonal center but does not establish the major mode clearly. The diatonic, simpler sections are represented by Section A, A', and A'' while the chromatic, more complex sections are represented by B. Section A and A' both feature additional phrases other than Phrase A and B. Phrases C and D in Section A and Phrase C in Section A' are sections Barber uses to outline the leading tone seventh chord, discussed below in the Harmony subsection. The Coda repeats Introduction 1 in full and borrows melodic material from Section A for the final six bars; these last few measures function as an extended final cadence from V-I. The transitional material that includes the short cadenza harmonically moves toward a v7/V to V cadence in E-flat major (f minor 7 to B-flat major), setting up the transition back to E-flat major through the material of Introduction 2.

### Harmony

Harmonically, the main melody of Barber's *Canzonetta* stays strictly within the established key of E-flat major. Each time this melody appears, subtle changes in voicing or texture occur, but the basic harmonies stay remarkably similar and mostly diatonic. It is only within the chromatic sections of this piece that we find more complex harmonies. Barber uses these different harmonies to imply formal divisions in the work, separating diatonic sections with more traditional harmonic structures from the chromatic sections full of unusual chords and atypical harmonic motion. In Figure 4.1 above, the diatonic sections are represented by A's and the chromatic sections by B's.

A striking feature of this piece is the noticeable lack of strong cadential moments, which gives the melody a weightless quality, always suspended above the changing harmonies. The first V7 – I cadence in measures 12 through 13, normally one of the

strongest and most decisive of cadences, is weakened by the presence of the 4-3 suspension in the oboe line and the abrupt start of the next phrase. In this 4-3 suspension, the A-flat lasts for a total of five beats while the G only lasts for two, quickly jumping to an E-flat to begin the next phrase (see Figure 4.2 below).

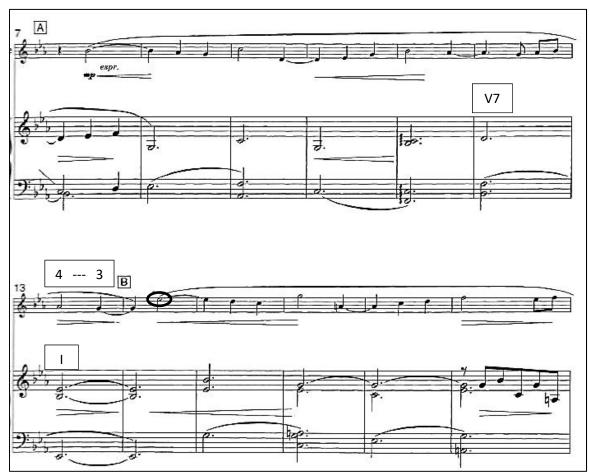


Figure 4.2 CANZONETTA By Samuel Barber and Charles Turner, mm. 7-18. Copyright ©1978 (Renewed) by G. Schirmer, Inc. (ASCAP), International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

Through structuring the harmony in this way, Barber is furthering the sensation of floating by truncating the feeling of rest that normally accompanies a cadential moment. The quick departure from the suspension's resolution on G to the E-flat serves another purpose as well; removing the third from the E-flat major chord in measure 14 blurs the modality at the beginning of the second phrase, helping to imply a change to C minor.

This modal change is supported by the melodic contour in the first three bars of the second phrase—measures 14 through 16—which outline C minor with E-flat, D, and C, followed by a G.

At this point, Barber begins to introduce more chromatic harmonies and blurs the expected tonal center of E-flat. Interestingly, he almost immediately moves away from the functional harmony that is used in the opening two phrases—from the beginning up until measure 20—and focuses on a more chromatic harmonic structure. Analyzing the individual chords between measures 20 and 34 proves frustrating and non-representative of the harmony; instead, examining the bass line alone reveals the true purpose of this section. Beginning in measure 23 and continuing on through measure 34, Barber outlines a fully-diminished seventh chord.

Fully-diminished seventh chords are used in numerous ways, and they are particularly noteworthy due to their symmetrical nature. Composed of a stack of minor thirds, a fully-diminished seventh chord has the same basic sound in all inversions.

Because adding additional minor thirds on top of this chord will produce no new notes, there are only three distinct fully-diminished seventh chords available in the classical tradition. This symmetry makes them an excellent choice for use in enharmonic modulations and chromatic motion. In most cases, fully-diminished seventh chords are used to replace a dominant seventh chord; typically called leading tone diminished seventh chords, these are built on the leading tone of the tonic. For example, in the key of E-flat major a dominant seventh chord would consist of B-flat, D, F, and A-flat and the leading tone fully diminished seventh chord of D, F, A-flat, and C-flat. Because these two chords share three pitches, the leading tone seventh chord can effectively replace the

dominant seventh chord harmonically. Barber uses the D fully diminished seventh chord—D, F, A-flat, C-flat—throughout this entire section, facilitating the chromatic nature of the accompanying chords.

What makes the use of this chord to outline the bass line particularly remarkable is how it affects the function of this chromatic section. Essentially, the full chromatic interlude from measures 23 to 34 takes on a dominant function, harmonically anticipating the return to E-flat major in measure 38. Following this extended elaboration of the leading tone seventh chord, the listener is led to yet another interesting chord in measures 36 and 37. Here, Barber writes A-flat, C-flat, E-flat and F-sharp, which at first glance resembles an A-flat minor seventh chord with the expected G-flat spelled enharmonically. However, the use of the F-sharp instead of the G-flat is an important substitution. The A-flat as the lowest note and the F-sharp as the highest note in this chord create an augmented sixth interval, pointing to a German augmented sixth chord.

Normally, one would expect to find this chord composed of the following scale degrees in any given key: flat six, one, flat three, and sharp four, where the flat six and sharp four create the necessary augmented sixth interval. In E-flat major, such a chord would consist of C-flat, E-flat, G-flat, and A-natural, yet this is not what one finds here. The sharp four (A-natural) is missing, leaving instead the natural four (A-flat). Respelling the chord to place the A-flat in the bass gives us the appropriate augmented sixth interval with the F-sharp in the oboe line, but the presence of the C-flat creates what amounts to a minor German augmented sixth chord. (See Figure 4.3 below for the leading tone seventh chord and the minor German augmented sixth chord).

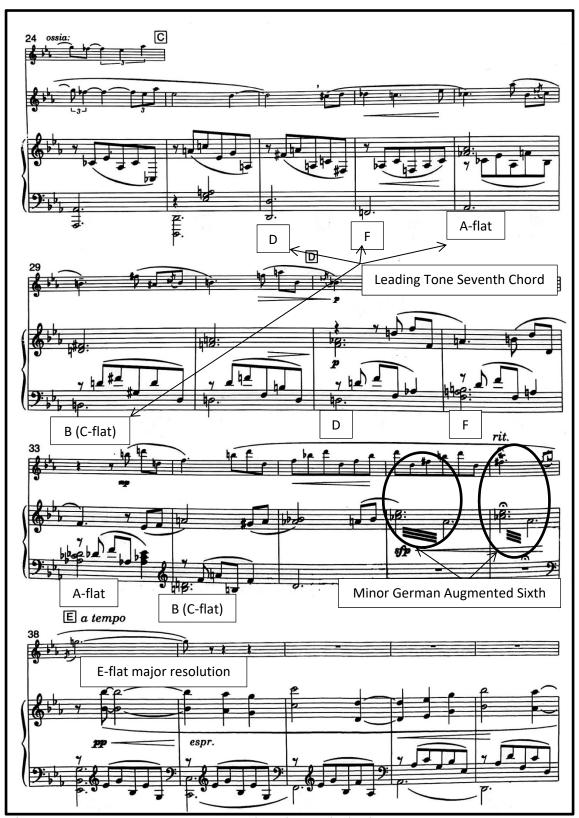


Figure 4.3 CANZONETTA By Samuel Barber and Charles Turner, mm. 24-37, 38-42. Copyright ©1978 (Renewed) by G. Schirmer, Inc. (ASCAP), International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

The typical function of a German augmented sixth chord would be as a predominant chord, with the augmented sixth interval resolving in opposite directions to an octave and leading to a dominant chord. In this case, this minor German augmented sixth is functioning as a dominant chord already, resolving directly to the tonic chord of E-flat major. The augmented sixth interval of A-flat and F-sharp resolves outwardly to an octave G, supporting the classification of this chord as a minor German augmented sixth chord. Here Barber uses traditional nineteenth century harmonic language and alters the function of the chords to create his own unique cadence. Figure 4.3 shows this unique chord and its resolution to E flat major.

Following this unusual cadence, the exact opening melody returns in the accompaniment—section A' as shown in Figure 4.1 above. The harmonic progression in this section remains almost identical to the original, though a steady pattern of eighth notes creates a different texture. Similar to the section shown in Figure 4.3 above, the bass line begins to outline a leading tone diminished seventh chord in measures 53 through 59; unlike the first instance, here the chord leads to a v7/V in measure 62 which resolves as expected to a B-flat major chord in measure 63. Between these two chords is a note to insert a cadenza; if including a cadenza, certain considerations must be made in order to preserve the integrity of the harmonic motion. This problem, along with the author's suggestion, will be discussed at greater length in Chapter Five.

Though he pushes the limits of traditional harmony throughout the work, it is at this point that Barber turns to a more chromatic style and adopts a different sense of harmony all together. A brief introduction to this section from measures 63 to 69 moves from the dominant of E-flat (B-flat major) through progressively more chromatic chords

and, beginning in measure 67, moves through a descending chromatic bass line to arrive back on an E-flat. For the next eight bars, Barber establishes a tonal center of E-flat; the bass line outlines arpeggiated chords that are primarily made up of fourths and fifths, leaving the modality of this section ambiguous by rarely including the G-natural that would establish the key of E-flat major (See Figure 4.4 below).

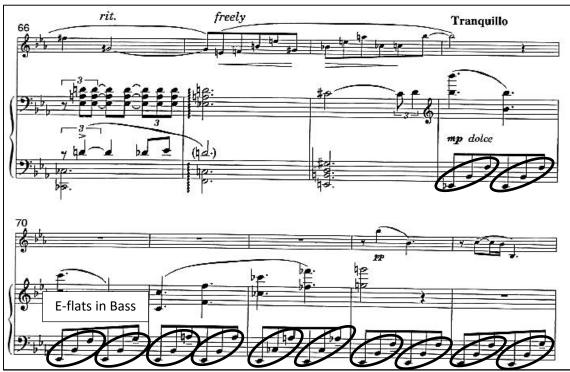


Figure 4.4 CANZONETTA By Samuel Barber and Charles Turner, mm. 66-74. Copyright ©1978 (Renewed) by G. Schirmer, Inc. (ASCAP), International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

Supporting this idea of a tonal center is the grouping of the bass line into two repetitions of three eighth notes each, where the E-flat always coincides with the melodic line's two dotted quarter notes in each bar. The prominence of fourths and fifths throughout this section points to the use of quartal and quintal harmony (chords built on intervals of fourths or fifths as opposed to thirds), confirmed by the chord in measure 81 consisting of C, D, E-flat, E, F, A-flat, and A (see Figure 4.5 below). Analyzing this chord in the

traditional nineteenth century fashion produces frustrating results; however, upon closer inspection the underlying fourths of C to F, E-flat to A-flat, and E to A and the fifth of D to A become apparent. The D also acts as a leading tone to E-flat major, facilitating the return of the original introductory material.

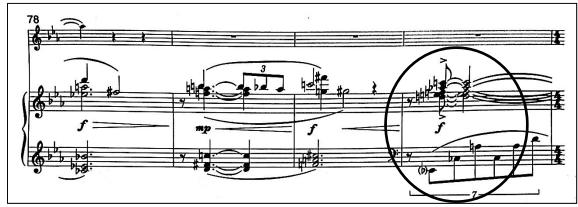


Figure 4.5 CANZONETTA By Samuel Barber and Charles Turner, mm. 78-81. Copyright ©1978 (Renewed) by G. Schirmer, Inc. (ASCAP), International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

Sections A" and the second of the B sections follow essentially the same harmony as before, with minor adjustments. Most obviously, Intro 2'—measures 107 to 113—is transposed up by a major third, emphasizing the descending chromatic motion in the melody, and the final note of the oboe's chromatic scale in measures 119 through 121 is raised to a B-flat to fit into the E-flat major chord on the downbeat of that bar. Section (A), or the Coda, shown in Figure 4.1 above consists of another exact repeat of Intro 1 and an extended V-I final cadence across the last six bars, ending definitively in E-flat major on an E-flat to G major third.

# Melody

The weightless quality of this piece, mentioned above, is primarily indebted to the nature of the melodic line. Delayed harmonic resolutions resulting from suspensions across the bar lines create a suspended melodic motion, and a lack of downbeats propels

the melody forward. In fact, the opening phrase contains several suspensions and non-chord tones furthering this impression. Though many types of suspensions exist, this piece features frequent use of 4-3 suspensions throughout. Numerous non-chord tones appear as well, but the most important for this analysis include appoggiaturas and escape tones. Appoggiaturas are typically approached by leap and resolved by step, usually in the opposite direction, and escape tones are approached by step and resolved by leap, again usually in the opposite direction upward by step. Figure 4.6 below illustrates some of these examples.

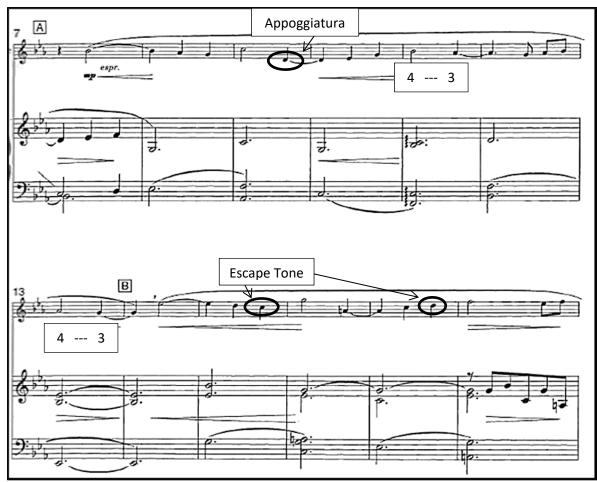


Figure 4.6 CANZONETTA By Samuel Barber and Charles Turner, mm. 7-18. Copyright ©1978 (Renewed) by G. Schirmer, Inc. (ASCAP), International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

The melody proceeds for the most part by stepwise motion, employing occasional leaps typically of major or minor sixths and sevenths. Octave leaps are also used, though appearing only in moments of harmonic tension and in the B sections of the piece. The use of these wide intervals results in quick changes in register that often create execution issues for the performer, which will be addressed in greater detail in Chapter Five. Within the B sections of the piece, the melody established in the piano line is echoed and subsequently embellished in the oboe part, shown in Figure 4.7 below. As a result, the ascending chromatic motion with these emphasized melodic notes in the oboe line sounds improvisatory and flowing. This place in the piece is the only point where the oboe is asked to perform notes of shorter duration than the established quarter notes and eighth notes. Even so, the scale itself is merely a flourish, and the melodic line must remain the priority.



Figure 4.7 CANZONETTA By Samuel Barber and Charles Turner, mm. 66-77. Copyright ©1978 (Renewed) by G. Schirmer, Inc. (ASCAP), International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

The last seven bars of this piece present an interesting melodic and harmonic issue, adding to the use of the final few measures as an extended V-I cadence. In the oboe line, the final three notes played are B-flat, A-flat, and G, where the G is the third of the final E-flat major harmony. However, the arrival to the G-natural in the oboe precedes the arrival of the piano line to the final E-flat by one and a half bars, causing an appoggiatura on the second beat of measure 131 in the piano. This displaced harmonic arrival can

cause some problems with the intonation of the last note in the oboe, which will be addressed more thoroughly in Chapter Five.

# Rhythm and Texture

Rhythm in the *Canzonetta* is generally simple and used primarily as a textural device. Often Barber overlaps basic rhythms, creating a contrapuntal texture throughout the movement; melody lines frequently intersect, and constant patterns in the accompaniment create a feeling of perpetual motion. More complex rhythms appear as the chromaticism becomes more pronounced. Intro 2 leading into the first B section of the piece uses an ostinato pattern in the accompaniment between measures 63 and 66, shown in Figure 4.8 below.



Figure 4.8 CANZONETTA By Samuel Barber and Charles Turner, mm. 62-65. Copyright ©1978 (Renewed) by G. Schirmer, Inc. (ASCAP), International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

This pattern creates an odd sensation for the audience and performer, due to the absence of downbeats in the accompaniment. As only one downbeat appears in measure 65, it can be quite easy to lose the sense of pulse. As a performer, one must trust their internal rhythm and try not to focus on the piano line. This disorienting sensation sets up the B section as something quite different from the mostly conventional harmonies and patterns in the A sections. In Intro 2, Barber is disturbing the rhythm and pulse by

introducing the different ostinato texture, which leads up to his further distortion of conventional harmonies and patterns with the adoption of E-flat as a tonal center rather than E-flat major as a key area.

The first B section beginning in measure 69 groups eighth notes in the bass line of the piano into groups of three, creating another ostinato pattern to emphasize the new dotted quarter note melody. These same ostinato patterns are used in Intro 2' and the second B section beginning at measure 107 and continuing through measure 121. (See measures 69 through 76 in Figure 4.8 above for this ostinato pattern in the piano.) The contrapuntal texture Barber employs is most obvious in the opening introductory material, both initially and each time it occurs throughout the piece. Figure 4.9 below shows the overlapping entrances in the piano accompaniment, which creates the impression of three simultaneous separate voices.

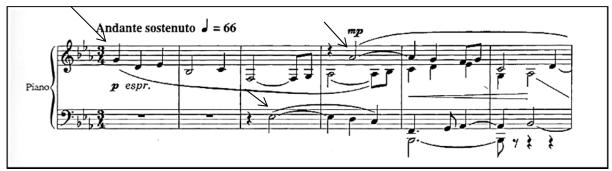


Figure 4.9 CANZONETTA By Samuel Barber and Charles Turner, mm. 1-6. Copyright ©1978 (Renewed) by G. Schirmer, Inc. (ASCAP), International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

In all recurrences of the A section, overlapping entrances of the melody are used to enrich the texture of the main melodic line. The oboe's initial statement of the theme ends each phrase before beginning the next phrase, but when the A section begins to reappear, Barber begins overlapping the entrances of new phrases with the ends of the

previous phrases. Figure 4.1 above shows some of these overlapping phrases within the form, and Figure 4.10 below shows one example.

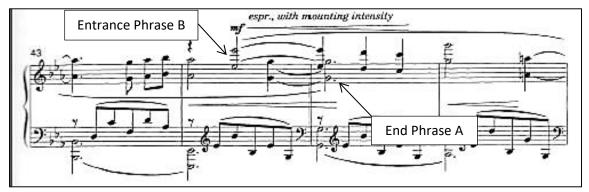


Figure 4.10 CANZONETTA By Samuel Barber and Charles Turner, mm. 43-46. Copyright ©1978 (Renewed) by G. Schirmer, Inc. (ASCAP), International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

## Closing

In the next chapter, certain elements of the previous formal analysis—harmony, melody, rhythm and texture—will be examined through the lens of a performer. Problems specific to the oboist and problems involving the ensemble will be addressed. Practice ideas, tips for executing difficult elements, and various suggestions for interpretation will be offered to facilitate ease of preparation and to serve as an extra resource for oboists aspiring to perform this work.

# Chapter Five: Performance Guide to Canzonetta for Oboe and String Orchestra

Performing the *Canzonetta* offers a multitude of subtle challenges in execution. Deceptively simple at first glance, the work is generally idiomatic for oboe; it contains mostly basic rhythms and remains within the low to middle range of the instrument. Many of the difficulties are more understated than complex rhythms, an extreme high range, or "technical" passages that must be quickly executed. In fact, some of these challenges remain hidden until one actually begins to work on the piece and attempt to coordinate with the accompaniment. There are numerous subtleties of intonation, a very specific type of smooth legato, and problems of phrasing that may be unnoticed at first glance.

Often overlooked as a quick filler piece or one that will be easy to learn, the Barber *Canzonetta* is sometimes unfairly dismissed as not challenging enough; in fact, the author herself admits to being so deceived. A deeper understanding of the harmonic and melodic qualities of the work reveals several issues that will require attention; among these are control of intonation, breathing, use of vibrato, problems of phrasing, ensemble concerns, and execution of the cadenza. These and other concerns that may arise, along with practice suggestions and notes on interpretation, will be addressed below.

#### **Breath Control**

Barber's penchant for vocal lyricism and long-breathed phrases is immediately clear at the start of this piece. In fact, the best approach to the *Canzonetta* is to employ a vocal-oriented style throughout. As a composer that frequently wrote vocal music and was an excellent singer himself, Barber would probably have seen the practice of approaching some elements as a singer might be both helpful and desirable. Imitating the

human voice is something the oboe does particularly well, due to its unique timbre—from the rich overtones caused by the conical bore—and plaintive tone. The opening phrases in the oboe up through measure 31 require the most planning and endurance of any section of the piece. Though breath marks are indicated in measures 12 and 26, the slow tempo of quarter note equals 66 makes this 25 bar stretch taxing in terms of breath control.

The two breath marks indicated in the oboe part are not always enough to make it through this opening section effectively. If one finds that this phrase is too taxing with only two breaths, it is possible to add a third breath between the second and third beats of measure 20. Taking this extra breath requires that special attention be paid to the end of the D-natural on beat two of measure 20, as there is a crescendo indicated beginning in measure 19 intended to proceed through the next measure. The D must increase in energy and intensity, ending with the sensation that the note is continuing upward even as a breath is taken. This impression of verve and direction can be achieved by increasing the speed of the vibrato at the end of the note and matching this speed and intensity for the B-flat on the third beat.

As any oboist will be aware, exhalation is equally important if not more so than inhalation on the oboe in terms of pacing the breaths. Due to the small size of the oboe's bore and of the reed, getting rid of all the air in the lungs in one phrase is virtually impossible. Instead, the stale air turning to carbon dioxide that remains in the lungs must be exhaled to make way for fresh oxygen. In this piece, the slower tempo makes it possible to exhale and inhale in the same place. To properly pace the breathing in this opening section, a quick exhale and inhale should be taken each place a breath mark is indicated, including the additional added breath mark if used.

# Vibrato and Phrasing

In order to achieve the vocal style necessary for this piece, special attention must be given to the placement, speed, and quality of the vibrato as it relates to the direction of the phrases. Vibrato should be used as an expressive tool in this piece, emphasizing not only the peaks of individual phrases but also the shifting harmonies and changes in mood. Speed and frequency of the vibrato may be manipulated just as a vocalist might in order to reflect these moments within the music. For the first two phrases, the vibrato should be of a slower speed with less frequency of vibration, helping to reflect the calm and suspended quality of the opening melody. Following the *crescendo* in measures 10 and 11, the speed should increase to the peak of the phrase on the A-flat tied over the bar line between measures 11 and 12. Similarly, the speed should decrease with the *decrescendo* in measure 13, though only when the note changes to a G-natural on the third beat. Slowing the speed of the vibrato too early does not allow the phrase to be truly finished.

Due to the weightless nature of the melody line and its frequent suspensions, the connections between the notes are of particular importance, requiring an active, spinning air stream and supple finger motion throughout each phrase. Achieving a smooth legato in this opening phrase—and throughout the piece—is made significantly more difficult by the downward slurs Barber employs. For a vocalist, such leaps would be relatively simple to execute, but downward slurs present a technical problem for many oboists.

Care must be taken with the lower octave so that the note speaks exactly in time and there is no delay in the sound. This shift in range often requires a subtle adjustment in the embouchure involving a lowered jaw position and tongue, similar to the voicing

techniques used by vocalists. These adjustments create a larger opening in the mouth and help to facilitate the low register.

In the first phrase shown below in Figure 5.1, the downward slur from C5 to D4 crosses from the middle to low range of the instrument, D4 being only four notes from the lowest possible pitch on the oboe (B-flat 3). A peculiarity of the oboe as compared to other instruments is that its low range is actually more powerful in volume than its middle range. Often for other woodwind instruments, the lowest registers can be significantly softer than the middle registers. This idiosyncrasy in the oboe's low register makes landing gently and unobtrusively on the low D problematic. Setting the embouchure and jaw position for the lowest note while still on the C5 can help, but there is often still a significant difference in volume between these two notes. If one attempts to play the D too softly, there is a danger of the note not speaking at all. To avoid this, the C5 should increase slightly in volume towards the end of the note and the air stream should be faster before descending to the D4. This technique should feel as though the air is curving up and then down into the lower note.

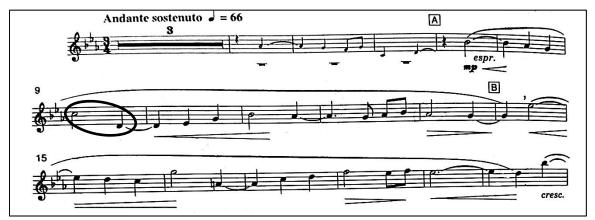


Figure 5.1 CANZONETTA By Samuel Barber and Charles Turner, mm. 1-20. Copyright ©1978 (Renewed) by G. Schirmer, Inc. (ASCAP), International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

One effective practice method for becoming familiar with this sensation is to work on the octave downward slur from D5 to D4. This exact gesture appears a few times in the literature, most notably in the first movement of Poulenc's *Sonata for Oboe and Piano* and in Paladilhe's famous *Solo pours Hautbois*. One suggested technique for executing this slur is to lift the first finger of the left hand after initially sounding the D5 and then place the finger down covering the half hole when the D4 should sound. One can almost feel the direction of the air when practicing this gesture, and replicating this type of air stream can help with other similar downward slurs.

The practice technique of simplifying the melody down to a skeleton can be applied throughout the piece to help solidify the direction of the phrases. <sup>41</sup> For example, the first phrase can be simplified down to just seven notes. In Figure 5.2 below, the original phrase is shown written out with the simplified skeleton melody underneath. Once the direction of the phrase is solidified with this simplification technique, the other notes may be added back. Practicing in this way allows the performer to truly understand the direction of non-harmonic notes and their resolutions, creating a more unified line. Breaking down a melody line to the "skeleton melody" can be applied to nearly every piece of music, not just for oboe but for other instrument families and vocalists as well.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> The term "skeleton melody" is borrowed from Dr. ToniMarie Marchioni, Assistant Professor of Oboe at the University of Kentucky, who uses this technique and terminology frequently with her students.



Figure 5.2 Original Melody and Skeleton Melody, CANZONETTA By Samuel Barber and Charles Turner, mm. 7-14. Copyright ©1978 (Renewed) by G. Schirmer, Inc. (ASCAP), International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

The second phrase beginning in measure 14 benefits from a narrower vibrato, indicating a change in the mood to something progressively more agitated. After the peak of this phrase on the A-natural on the first beat of measure 17, there should be a color change and a gradually slowing vibrato; the C and D-natural on beats two and three of that bar should progressively soften in texture, so that the E-flat and F on the third beat of measure 18 are almost translucent. Measures 19 and 20 should see a quickly increasing speed and frequency of vibrato to match the emotional angst of this section. Paying particular attention to the trajectory of the end of the D-natural is essential to facilitating the written *crescendo* and allows for an optional breath, as mentioned above. Once the F-flat is reached in the triplet passage between measures 23 and 24, the tone color should become silky and cooler; a wider vibrato helps facilitate this change.

The final two phrases of the first section between measure 26 and 38 should feature a consistent medium speed in the vibrato, slightly wider at first but becoming faster and narrower on the dotted quarter notes in measures 30 and 34. The passage between measure 31 and 38 shown in Figure 5.3 below features a rhythmic motif involving octave downward slurs traded between the treble and bass clef of the piano and

the oboe line. As the repetitions of this motif become more compact, the tension in the phrase begins to increase toward the upcoming cadence on an E-flat major chord in measure 38. These eighth notes can be grouped in such a way that this increase in tension is emphasized and directed across the bar lines. Stressing the repeated D5s in the oboe line as though they are downbeats creates a grouping dissonance, a type of metric dissonance that occurs between beats and implies a different meter than what is written. In this case, the grouping dissonance suggests a 2/4 time signature instead of the written 3/4.

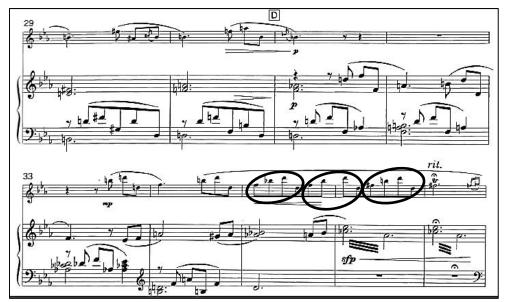


Figure 5.3 CANZONETTA By Samuel Barber and Charles Turner, mm. 29-37. Copyright ©1978 (Renewed) by G. Schirmer, Inc. (ASCAP), International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

The above grouping dissonance by its nature creates a smaller pulse that propels forward. However, looking at Figure 5.3 one can see that there is a *ritardando* indicated in measure 37. At this point, a *tremolo* in the piano part, trill in the oboe part and a fermata above the note in both parts are written. Realistically, it would be impossible to appropriately perform a *ritardando* and a fermata at the same time with no moving notes aside from the *tremolo* and trill. One solution could be moving the *ritardando* back a

measure so that the oboist could slow the eighth notes to demonstrate the *ritardando*, however the tendency of the grouping dissonance to lean forward and the increasing harmonic tension at this point indicate the opposite should be true. In order to reflect the musical intentions of this section, it is more appropriate to subtly increase the tempo through the eighth notes in measures 34 through 36, slowing down for the last eighth note pick up into the trill. The trill should begin slowly and increase in speed throughout measure 37.

Immediately after this trill in measure 37, the oboe has a grace note written from an E-flat to a G, shown in Figure 5.4 below. Harmonically, the F-sharp in the oboe line should resolve up to the G, but the low E-flat grace note interrupts this line. This E-flat—also the tonic note in the key—anticipates the arrival back to E-flat major and the return of the original melody. The G should be the peak of this phrase in both volume and intensity, but as discussed above, the low register of the oboe is inherently louder than the middle and upper registers, making this low E-flat even more problematic. To solve this issue, the E-flat grace note should be quick and played with slight vibrato, and the peak of the *crescendo* should be slightly delayed to ensure that the G is louder than both the F-sharp that precedes it and the E-flat grace note. Timing the *crescendo* in this way and adding vibrato will help mask the nature of the low note and maintain the integrity of the line. Once the G-natural is reached, the vibrato should be fast and wide to reflect the harmonic arrival of the line.

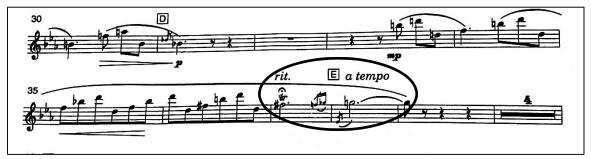


Figure 5.4 CANZONETTA By Samuel Barber and Charles Turner, mm. 30-43. Copyright ©1978 (Renewed) by G. Schirmer, Inc. (ASCAP), International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

At the next entrance of the soloist in measure 55, the oboe should use a softer, slower vibrato in order to blend with the piano. There should be a slight *crescendo* beginning on the triplet pickups to measure 57 and peaking on the B-flat in measure 58. A color change should accompany the *descrescendo* indicated in this bar with only barely-audible vibrato, changing to the *pianissimo* A-natural as smoothly as possible. The cadenza itself will be discussed below, but it should be noted that the transition from the cadenza into the next section beginning at 63 should proceed without a break.

Similar to the case of grouping dissonance shown in Figure 5.3, the eighth notes marked *freely* leading into measure 69 should be grouped so that the E-natural, G-sharp, and C-flat act as downbeats, creating the impression of a 2/4 time signature instead of the written 3/4 (see Figure 5.5). A more intense and slightly wider vibrato should be applied to those three notes and they should be played with a slight *tenuto*. Though the marking *freely* in the music indicates that the performer may do what they feel is appropriate, one suggestion is to add a slight *accelerando* through the *crescendo* and begin to slow down again on the last three eighth notes of measure 68. These adjustments in tempo help to set up the B section, marked *Tranquillo*.

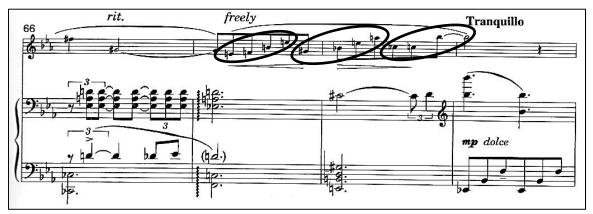


Figure 5.5 CANZONETTA By Samuel Barber and Charles Turner, mm. 66-69. Copyright ©1978 (Renewed) by G. Schirmer, Inc. (ASCAP), International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

In this section, the oboe echoes and embellishes the melody first established by the piano. Measures 73 through 77 contain the most difficult segment to execute in the whole piece. With a dynamic marking of *pianissimo*, the oboist is required to cross two full octaves of the instrument while maintaining a delicate tone, smooth legato, and proper intonation. Because this same passage recurs later at measure 177, one could choose different interpretations for each of these sections. For the first occurrence at measure 73, consider a slight *crescendo* up the chromatic scale and through the A-natural in measure 77. This reflects the *crescendo* in the piano part across the bar line into measure 78. At the second occurrence beginning in measure 117, it can be highly effective to *descrescendo* slightly up to the B-flat, blending in with the *pianissimo* marking in the piano part.

At either occurrence, the effect of the upward chromatic scale should be almost that of a *glissando*, with the changes between notes as silent as possible. A good way to practice this effect is to first play only the main melody notes, making these transitions as smooth as possible. After focusing on the quality and consistency of the air between each of these pitches, all the other notes can be added back in once the desired effect is

achieved. Care must also be taken with the downward slurs between the lower B-flats in measure 74 and between the C-flat and lower B-flat in measure 118. Vibrato must be used on the low B-flat, the jaw and embouchure must be in place for the lower register, and the air should be directed as discussed above to ensure the notes speak easily.

Finally, the last three notes of the piece should be played with an increasing vibrato speed through the *crescendo* until the peak at the start of the G-natural in measure 130. The last note should have a slightly softer texture, similar to the A-natural in measure 59, and a slower and more delicate vibrato. The *tenuto* over the A-flat in measure 128 indicates that the performer should play the note with a legato tongue, without interrupting the direction of the line. It should be noted that the *descrescendo* need not start until the beginning of measure 131. As discussed in the harmony section in Chapter Four, the final emotional arrival of the oboe and accompaniment are displaced such that the oboe ends a full measure and a half before the accompaniment. In this case, the displaced arrivals add an element of tension and pathos to the ending of this work; the oboe's emotional resolution can be interpreted as Samuel Barber's own awareness and acceptance of his coming death, while the piano's resolution may represent the actual moment of his passing.

#### Intonation

There are a few specific problem areas in this piece in terms of intonation, especially regarding the oboe's relationship to the accompaniment. In particular, the previously mentioned downward slurs—especially when they cover an octave leap—can present problems in tuning across the octaves. The passage between measures 33 and 38 includes downward slurs from high Ds to middle Ds, requiring a slight adjustment in

embouchure to compensate for intonation problems. High notes on the oboe often require moving up on the reed to facilitate response and clarity; however, this technique can subsequently raise the pitch of the high notes. It is important to relax the embouchure slightly and move the reed back to its natural resting place when descending back to the middle register so that these notes do not rise too much in pitch.

In measures 73 to 74 and 117 to 118 the oboe covers a two octave range from the high B-flat to the low B-flat (the lowest note on the instrument). The low B-flat presents a unique intonation problem that differs from most other low notes on the oboe. Most professional oboes have a low B-flat resonance key on the bell, which though it improves the quality of the note causes the B-flat to be slightly sharp in pitch, unlike other low notes on the instrument which tend to be flat. If rolling out slightly on the reed does not correct this intonation issue enough, it is possible to plug the resonance key with a piece of cork or beeswax, which will lower the pitch of the low B-flat.

In the final phrase of the piece, the held G-natural which begins in measure 130 takes on a different function in the second to last bar. For the purposes of intonation, the performer must be aware that the G-natural becomes the major third to the E-flat in the piano in measure 132. Because the third must be around 14 cents low in order to make this interval perfectly in tune with respect to just intonation, the oboist must adjust the pitch of the G slightly when the piano finally resolves to the E-flat. In just intonation the tuning of scales and intervals is related to the overtone series, and players must adjust by ear. These adjustments normally apply to ensemble playing with wind or string instruments; in this case, they can be used whether playing with strings or piano, because the accompaniment only has an E-flat. Though subtle, this tuning adjustment will help

the intonation and quality of the last interval. It is important to look for these moments throughout the piece in order to know which position in the chord the oboe represents at any given moment. Since the piano obviously cannot change its intonation, it is up to the performer to use their ear to listen and make constant subtle adjustments..

## Relating to the Accompaniment

Though this piece is written for performance with a string orchestra, the arrangement for use with piano accompaniment is the most commonly performed version. Working with a pianist instead of a full string orchestra presents certain issues that must be considered. The first, already mentioned above, is the issue of intonation; because a piano is tuned according to equal temperament (a tuning system where a common frequency ratio is used between all notes of the chromatic scale), adjustments fall to the oboist alone in all cases. Secondly, there is the issue of phrasing and forward motion within the work. Working with strings brings with it a natural forward motion due to the use of the bow. As the bow must always be moving in order to produce a sound, a string orchestra is able to fully sustain through each measure and help to drive the phrases forward. This constant motion also helps to maintain the integrity of Barber's voice-leading through the chords and the suspensions and other dissonances over the bar lines.

By contrast, a piano is by design a percussion instrument—sound is produced by hammers hitting strings of various lengths. This percussive quality causes a natural decay in the sound and prevents the pianist from fully sustaining through chords. In the first phrase (shown in Figure 5.6 below), one can see that the piano is simply striking and holding dotted half note chords that last through the bar, sometimes even through two bars.



Figure 5.6 CANZONETTA By Samuel Barber and Charles Turner, mm. 7-18. Copyright ©1978 (Renewed) by G. Schirmer, Inc. (ASCAP), International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

The natural decay in the piano sound means that the oboist must do the work of keeping the line moving forward and sustaining through the phrase. Practically speaking, the marked tempo of quarter note equals 66 makes this almost impossible to achieve with a piano. For the purposes of maintaining the forward motion in the line and keeping the weightless and breathless quality of the melody, a better tempo would be closer to quarter note equals 80. Also helpful is thinking of the piece in a slow one instead of in three, or feeling the pulse for each full measure instead of for each individual beat. Internalizing this pulse helps the performer maintain forward motion in the piece and achieve the appropriate musical affect.

There are two main areas where synchronization and timing between the parts can be challenging: the first from measures 63 to 66 and 106 to 111 and the second from measures 75 to 76 and 119 to 120. In the first section, the piano has a rhythm that obscures nearly all the main beats in each bar and pits a triplet rhythm against eighth notes in the oboe line. To maintain consistency in tempo, it is important for the oboist to be aware of the left hand in the piano where downbeats in measures 63, 65, and 66 serve as reminders and help keep the oboe melody on course. When a similar section returns in measure 106, the left hand of the piano carries the rhythm, displacing the beat, while the right hand trades off a melody with the oboe, making the timing much simpler for both performers.

The second section appears first in measure 75 and later in measure 119. Here, the oboe plays a simple chromatic scale rhythmically divided so that the melody notes land in the same rhythm established by the piano in measures 71 through 73. The oboe's rhythm beginning in measure 75 (see Figure 5.7 below) requires that the longer notes line up with the correct eighth notes in the piano. The groups of fives and sixes must also be timed precisely so strict vertical alignment is maintained with the piano.

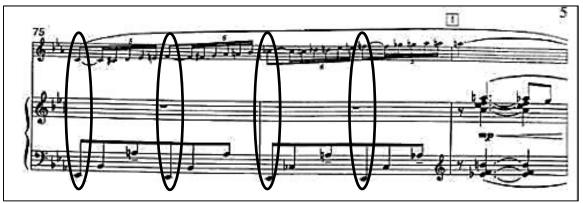


Figure 5.7 CANZONETTA By Samuel Barber and Charles Turner, mm. 75-77. Copyright ©1978 (Renewed) by G. Schirmer, Inc. (ASCAP), International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

#### Cadenza

Finally, there is the issue of whether or not to include a cadenza in performance. As this piece still remains infrequently performed, few recordings of the *Canzonetta* are readily available, and these offer different approaches on how to handle the cadenza. A recording close to the original premiere by oboist Julia Girdwood (now principal oboe of the Royal Opera House) with the Scottish Chamber Symphony leaves out the cadenza entirely, moving on immediately after the fermata in the previous bar. <sup>42</sup> In another recording from 1990 now accessible on YouTube, oboist Humbert Lucarelli performs the work with the Lehigh Valley Chamber Orchestra, adding within the space for a cadenza the first four bars of the oboe melody beginning in measure seven. <sup>43</sup> From this brief "cadenza" without the orchestra, he continues on directly in measure 63 as the ensemble unobtrusively joins. Oboist Keisuke Wakao joins pianist and conductor Christopher Eschenbach for a recording in 1999 using the piano arrangement; like Lucarelli, Wakao uses the opening four bars of the oboe melody as a cadenza and continues on in measure 63. <sup>44</sup> This version of the cadenza is reproduced below in Figure 5.8.

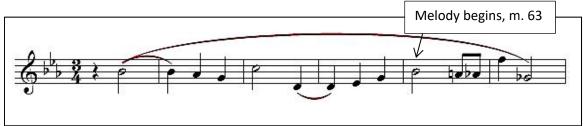


Figure 5.8, Cadenza for use in the *Canzonetta*, as played by Lucarelli and Wakao *Source*: Lucarelli 1990 and Wakao 1999.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> Samuel Barber, *Canzonetta for Oboe and String Orchestra*, Julia Girdwood and the Scottish Chamber Symphony, conducted by Jose Serebrier, Phoenix USA B00005YXZK, 1990, CD.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Samuel Barber, *Canzonetta for Oboe and String Orchestra*, Humbert Lucarelli and the Lehigh Valley Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Donald Spieth, Koch International Classics, 1990, YouTube upload, accessed 23 February 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yao2hx-K7xI.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Samuel Barber, *Canzonetta for Oboe and String Orchestra*, Keisuke Wakao and Christopher Eschenbach, Denon Records B00000I75R, 1999, CD.

The different ways in which performers approach the use of a cadenza in this work make a closer exploration of the original cadenza and controversy necessary. The dispute surrounding this work before its original premiere had to do primarily with a change in octave for one passage, but a *New York Times* article following the performance cites that the inclusion of a cadenza was part of the issue. John Rockwell writes that Charles Turner—Barber's friend and former student—called the New York Times complaining that the changing of certain passages and inclusion of a cadenza "falsified Barber's intentions." It seems odd though that Turner would complain about the cadenza's insertion, since as Heyman has noted, Harold Gomberg played a cadenza that Barber himself wrote to go with the piece at its premiere. The placement of the cadenza at nearly the exact middle of the work makes its exclusion seem inappropriate, though one that is exceedingly long and complex seems equally unfit for such a brief work; therefore, the use of a simple, short cadenza comparable to that played by Humbert Lucarelli and Keisuke Wakao might be considered the most suitable course. However, the problem becomes somewhat more complex when examining Barber's own cadenza for the work, as it differs markedly from the short cadenza used by Lucarelli and Wakao.

This original cadenza was written by Barber for oboist Harold Gomberg, though it was not included in the Schirmer edition prepared for publication by Charles Turner. Heyman identifies the location of the cadenza in her thematic catalogue of Barber's works, *Samuel Barber: A Thematic Catalogue of the Complete Works*: source A-a, one page containing the oboe cadenza in Heyman's private collection and source D, a reproduction of the copyist's short score with a few corrections and an insert of the

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> Rockwell, "Philharmonic: 4 Pieces by Modern Composers," *The New York Times*, 20 December 1981, accessed 22 February 2017, http://www.nytimes.com/1981/12/20/arts/philharmonic-4-pieces-by-modern-composers.html.

cadenza housed in the Music Division at the Library of Congress. 46 Barber's cadenza was played by Harold Gomberg at the original premiere and is quite different from the cadenza used by Lucarelli and Wakao. Transcribed below is the cadenza for comparison purposes (see Figure 5.9).

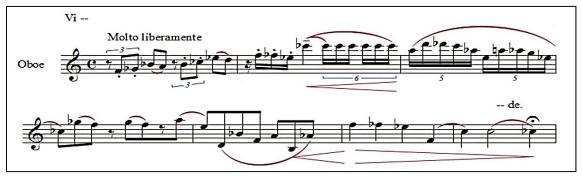


Figure 5.9 Cadenza by Samuel Barber, contained in Source D from Heyman's Samuel Barber: A Thematic Catalogue of the Complete Works, housed in the Music Division at the Library of Congress, ML96.B267 Case. LC Control No. 2001539257.<sup>47</sup>

The time signature seen above has been added for purposes of clarity in the transcription and does not appear in the manuscript. Note also that the quintuplets shown above appear with the number six under each of these instead of the number five. In these sets of five the notes above look exactly as shown here, however there are only five notes written where a sextuplet is indicated. The words Molto liberamente are written above the cadenza in the manuscript and above this are the letters "Vi" at the beginning of the insert and "de" at the end. This spells out the Latin word vide meaning "see" or "consult," indicating that the added passage should be inserted as shown. In the second line of music above, there is a missing beat after the A-flat where an eighth note might be expected, but this is how the notes appear in the manuscript. Articulations indicated above are as written by Barber also.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Barbara Heyman, Samuel Barber: A Thematic Catalogue of the Complete Works, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 471-472.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Ibid, 471.

Looking at these two very different types of cadenzas, writing one's own cadenza might seem challenging. After all, the above approaches are nearly opposite in style. Barber's own cadenza features more rhythmic complexity, varieties in articulation, and a wider range of the instrument than he uses anywhere else in the piece. By contrast, the cadenza used by Lucarelli and Wakao is simple in the extreme, borrowing directly from Barber's work without any additions. In writing a cadenza, it is important to consider the harmony and attempt to fit the passage within the general framework of the established chord progressions. Typical convention calls for the use of common motives or perhaps a fragment of melody as the base, but a certain amount of creativity is necessary. For this piece, the author suggests a simpler approach, if the performer does not use Barber's own cadenza. Clearly Barber had a vision in mind for the piece which included the specific cadenza shown above. It would be best to either play his own cadenza or include a simple option, much like Figure 5.10 below, which shows a suggestion for a simpler cadenza that would be appropriate for use in performance, written by the author.



Figure 5.10: Suggested cadenza for use in the *Canzonetta*, Sallas 2017.

It is unclear why Charles Turner chose not to include Barber's own cadenza in the work when preparing the manuscript for publication, however this exclusion has resulted in the cadenza never being used outside of the work's premiere. Barbara Heyman stated the following about the cadenza in an email to the author on March 7, 2017: "Barber wrote that cadenza for Gomberg and I believe he would have put it in the Schirmer

edition had he lived long enough to take control of it." Barber's own cadenza is clearly best suited to the harmony he sets up, so it remains a mystery why Charles Turner chose not to include the cadenza in the published edition.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> Barbara Heyman, e-mail message to the author, March 7, 2017.

## **Chapter Six: Conclusion**

Samuel Barber's music made him one of the most successful and popular composers of his day. His two contradictory styles—one simple and diatonic and the other complex and chromatic—are perfectly synthesized in this brief and melancholy work. With its searching, wistful melody and rich, neo-romantic textures and harmonies, this simple piece serves as a testament to his legacy and excellent representative of his compositional style. Given this legacy, Barber's *Canzonetta for Oboe and String Orchestra* remains a surprisingly underperformed work. Difficult enough to challenge professionals while still accessible to younger students, it would be an excellent teaching tool and an appropriate piece for a recital at the graduate or undergraduate level.

Communicating a variety of moods and emotions throughout the work, the *Canzonetta* is alternately peaceful, romantic, passionate, heartrending, and even sweet. As described in previous chapters, the technical challenges in this work are not always immediately obvious. Rather, the *Canzonetta* requires that the performer take a closer look at the subtleties necessary to deliver a refined and moving performance. Rather than an emphasis on finger technique and speed of passagework, Barber seems focused here on the vocal lyricism that makes up such an essential part of his compositional style. In a way, the ability to execute delicate, soft playing across the full range of the instrument and to offer a truly thoughtful, detailed interpretation of this deceptively simple work requires even more virtuosity and skill on the part of the performer than a piece featuring difficult runs or complex rhythms.

The openness and sensitivity necessary to perform this work are much more difficult to learn than just technical skill. With time spent in the practice room, many can

develop the precision and skill necessary to execute impressive feats of speed and technique. However, learning how to connect with an audience and deliver an inspiring and emotionally stirring performance takes far more dedication and artistry. Separating the true artist from the amateur is the mastery of all of the elements of performance, not just vast technical skill or great interpretive skill alone. Perhaps the other movements of the *Canzonetta* would have contained more challenges in terms of speed or difficult passagework, but no notes or sketches remain to illuminate that particular mystery. In the end, Barber's last work—a simple song—stands on its own, a vital and emotionally challenging work deserving of a place in every oboists' repertoire.

# Part II

Monday, October 19 2015, 8pm

# **PROGRAM**

| I. Theme II. Oration III. March IV. Exercises V. Commination VI. Chorale VII. Waltz VIII. Polka IX. Resolution |   | Benjamin Britten<br>(1913-1976) |
|--|---|---------------------------------|
| Black Anemones (1980)  |   | Joseph Schwantner (1943-)       |
| Inner Song (1992)  |   | Elliott Carter (1908-2012)      |
| -INTERMISSION-   |   |                                 |
| Phantasy Quartet, Op. 2 (1932)   | Chi Young Song, Violin<br>Josquin Larsen, Viola<br>Danny Hoppe, Cello | Benjamin Britten<br>(1913-1976) |
| Sonatina for oboe and piano, Op. 28  I. Leggiero  II. Andante con moto  III. Vivace                            | 3 (1951)  | Malcolm Arnold (1921-2006)      |

For recording purposes, please hold applause until after each piece and have cell phones on silent. No flash photography. Thank You!

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in oboe performance. Christine Sallas is a student of Dr. ToniMarie Marchioni.

## **Program Notes October 19 Recital**

Benjamin Britten, *Temporal Variations* (1936)

Composer Benjamin Britten is known for his pacifist views and much of his music carried this anti-war mark. Britten's *Temporal Variations* for oboe and piano has sometimes been interpreted in conflicting ways. Some scholars view it as merely a set of variations, while others argue there may be a subtext of war, typical of many of Britten's works; in this case, an anti-war slant seems more likely, due not only to his pacifist ideals but also to the timing and dedication of the work. Written during the gap between the two world wars, the variations were dedicated to Montagu Slater, <sup>49</sup> a writer who would later become the librettist for Britten's opera *Peter Grimes*. Britten composed this piece following Slater's request for a war requiem. Though the work was not explicitly titled as a war requiem, it can be assumed that the composer was at least considering the idea while working on this piece.

The work centers on a strikingly simple half-step motif, C sharp – D, which oboist Alex Klein argues can be interpreted as crying out "enough!" in protest to war itself. These outcries are interspersed with images of wartime, including the impassioned oration of a dictator, an aggressive military march, soldiers performing exercises and drills, and a melancholy chorale evoking the emptiness and devastation post battle. Also included are an awkward and lopsided waltz, a bizarre polka, and a "commination," defined as the threat of divine vengeance against sinners. The last variation is titled "Resolution," but this resolution ends on an ambiguous open fifth, missing the third to define the mode, major or minor, of the final chord. This leaves the listener to decide

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> Benjamin Britten, *Temporal Variations (1936)*, (London: Faber Music, Ltd., 1980), 1.

whether there will be hope for the future or whether the continuous slide to war is inevitable.

#### Joseph Schwantner, Black Anemones (1980)

Composer Joseph Schwantner has crafted a distinctive and easily recognizable style across his varied works. Though he composed using twelve tone methods early on, many of his later works evoke a false sense of tonality by the use of repeated pitches. He is also known for his dramatic flair and his skill in using the orchestra to create distinct and varied tone colors. Schwantner's compositions for band are equally unique, with many of his works calling for unusual techniques or instruments; for example, his piece .... And the mountains rising nowhere calls for the oboists to perform on water glasses tuned to various pitches in addition to their regular oboe parts. Even his works that do not employ these atypical devices create otherworldly textures and unique sound worlds. It is these qualities in particular that make his compositional style uniquely suited to the surrealistic text of Black Anemones. The piece originated as part of a set of songs for soprano voice and piano titled Two Poems of Agueda Pizarro. Due to its singing style, Black Anemones lends itself well to instrumental transcriptions and has been performed on flute, cello, and oboe among others.

Columbian-American poet Agueda Pizzaro is known for her Latin-American surrealist style and vivid natural imagery, evoking everything from soft and melodious beauty to images out of a nightmare. The text deals with a daughter's conflicted relationship with her mother, a figure in her life both inspiring and overwhelming, and a source of many contradictory emotions. These emotions are painted in the text using

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> Joseph Schwantner, *Sparrows/Music of Amber*, Britta Stallmeister, Florian Hoelscher, Holst Sinfonietta, and Klaus Simon, Naxos American Classics, B000QQR902, 2004, CD, liner notes.

varied textures in the piano accompaniment and contrasts in register and volume throughout. The plaintive and expressive oboe lends itself beautifully to portraying devotion and love mixed with elements of fear and anxiety. The version of *Black Anemones* performed here is the transcription for flute and piano. Pizzaro's unique and startling poem is shown below in an English translation by Barbara Stoller Miller.

"Mother, you watch me sleep and your life is a large tapestry of all the colors of all the most ancient murmurs, knot after twin knot, root after root of story. You don't know how fearful your beauty is as I sleep. Your hair is the moon of a sea sung in silence. You walk with silver lions and wait to estrange me deep in the rug
covered with sorrow
embroidered by you
in a fierce symmetry
binding with thread
of Persian silk
the pine trees and the griffins.
You call me blind,
you touch my eyes
with Black Anemones.
I am a spider that keeps spinning
from the spool in my womb,
weaving through eyes
the dew of flames
on the web."

-Agueda Pizarro, *Black Anemones* (English translation, Barbara Stoller Miller)

#### Elliott Carter, *Inner Song* (1992)

Elliott Carter's striking work *Inner Song* is the central movement of a trilogy for oboe and harp. The solo oboe movement owes its creation to a festival of Stephan Wolpe's music and to Carter's sketches on a hexachord used as the basis for Wolpe's *Suite in Hexachord for oboe and clarinet* (1936). *Inner Song* is dedicated to oboist Heinz Holliger, and it was he who gave the premiere performance at the 1992 festival. The inspiration for the work as a whole comes from the last two stanzas of Rainer Maria Rilke's *Sonette an Orpheus, II. 10*, and each of the movements is given a "motto."

"But existence is still enchanting for us; in hundreds of places it is still pristine, **A play of pure forces**, which no one can touch without kneeling and adoring.

# Words still peter out into what cannot be expressed...

And **music**, **ever new**, builds out of the most tremulous stones her divinely consecrated house in unexploitable space"

-Rainer Maria Rilke, *Sonette an Orpheus, II.* 10<sup>51</sup>

The solo harp movement, *Bariolage*, uses "a play of pure forces," and the duet for oboe and harp, *Immer Neu*, uses "music, ever new." For *Inner Song*, the motto is, "words still peter out into what cannot be expressed..." It is perhaps this focus on an overtly expressive motto that seems somewhat atypical of Carter's works. There is a notable absence of any metric modulation, and only occasionally is the flowing lyrical line interrupted by virtuosic passagework. Carter makes use of harmonics (producing a specific note by alternate fingerings to create a different tone color) and multiphonics (two or more notes produced simultaneously) in an elegant and approachable way that enhances the musical effect. The use of Wolpe's hexachord and its complement allow for the exploration of five intervals in varied spacings, culminating in three climactic descending figures at the heart of the work. Though certainly arresting when performed as a trilogy, each of the three pieces remain more than capable of standing alone as fascinating and compelling musical statements in their own right.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> Elliott Carter, *Inner Song*, (New York, NY: Hendon Music, Inc., 1993), program notes.

Benjamin Britten, "Phantasy" Quartet for Oboe and Strings, Op. 2 (1932)

Perhaps the best-known British composer of the twentieth century, Benjamin Britten is renowned primarily for his operas and vocal works, though he wrote in numerous other genres. Though he only composed four works specifically for the oboe (the "Phantasy" Quartet for Oboe and Strings, the Six Metamorphoses after Ovid, Two Insect Pieces, and the Temporal Variations), all of these have gone on to become staples in the oboe repertoire. The "Phantasy" Quartet for Oboe and Strings is the earliest of these, composed while Britten was a student at the Royal College of Music. While enrolled there, he won the Cobbett Prize for the Phantasy String Quintet in July of 1932. Later that fall, he composed the Phantasy quartet which was performed on a BBC radio broadcast by oboist Leon Goosens, to whom the piece is dedicated. The broadcast and subsequent performances contributed greatly to Britten's growing reputation as a composer. <sup>52</sup>

The structure of the "Phantasy" Quartet creates a musical arch. In the first few bars of the piece the cellist is featured, leading into a march-like introduction in the strings, with the oboist singing above. A quicker section then presents and develops a distinct rhythmic motif, subsequently interrupted by the central slow section featuring the strings. The oboist is notably absent during this middle section, re-entering afterwards to float above a triplet ostinato with an elegant, improvisatory air. Finally, the march-like introduction returns, ending with the cellist playing the first few bars again in reverse and completing the structural arch.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> Benjamin Britten, "*Phantasy*" *Quartet for Oboe and Strings, Op.* 2, Los Angeles Philharmonic, program notes by Howard Posner, accessed April 23, 2017, http://www.laphil.com/philpedia/music/phantasy-quartet-for-oboe-and-strings-op-2-benjamin-britten.

## Malcolm Arnold, Sonatina for Oboe and Piano (1951)

British composer Malcolm Arnold's output encompasses works in a variety of genres, including symphonies, several concertos, chamber music, and music for choir and band. He also wrote extensively for the ballet and theater, producing award-winning music for over a hundred films. Many of Malcolm Arnold's chamber works take on a cinematic quality, seeming to portray picturesque scenes and evoke varied moods through the instruments. His four woodwind sonatinas, all written between the years of 1948 and 1952, are each designed so that their respective instruments can revel in their most flattering and idiomatic ranges. <sup>53</sup> In part due to this characteristic writing and to the easy and unobtrusive flow of the works, they are satisfying and pleasurable for both performer and audience.

In the Sonatina for oboe, the pianist generally takes a supportive role in the first and second movements, though it occasionally emerges as a dramatic partner to the oboist. The first movement's theme is stylish and charming, punctuated by many sharp contrasts in articulation. Arresting piano chords in the second movement provide a dramatic backdrop to a simple yet heavily ornamented melody in the oboe, creating an otherworldly mood. The final movement gives the oboist a flashy tune full of flair and bravura, accompanied by hunting horn calls in the piano that give the movement a sunny and open character.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> Malcolm Arnold, *The Chamber Music of Malcolm Arnold, Vol.* 2, The Nash Ensemble, Hyperion Records CDH55072, 1984, CD, liner notes, 2-3, accessed April 23, 2017, http://www.hyperionrecords.co.uk/notes/55072-B.pdf.

Friday, February 19, 2016, 7:30 p.m.

### **PROGRAM**

Star Wars: Main Title (1977)

John Williams
(b. 1932)

Oboe Concerto in C Major, K. 314 (1777)

I. Allegro aperto

II. Adagio ma non troppo

III. Allegro

Christine Sallas, oboe

Trumpet Concerto in A-flat Major (1950)

Caden Holmes, *trumpet*Jan Pellant, *conductor* 

Alexander Arutiunian (1910-2012)

W.A. Mozart

(1756-1791)

# **INTERMISSION**

The Planets, Op. 32 (1914-1916)

Gustav Holst (1874-1934)

- I. Mars, the Bringer of War
- II. Venus, the Bringer of Peace
- III. Mercury, the Winged Messenger
- IV. Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity
- V. Saturn, the Bringer of Old Age
- VI. Uranus, the Magician
- VII. Neptune, the Mystic

# **Program Notes February 19 Concert**

W.A. Mozart, Oboe Concerto in C Major, K. 314 (1777)

Mozart's Oboe Concerto, like most of his other wind concertos, quickly became a standard in the repertoire after its rediscovery. Originally considered lost, the work was found in Salzburg in the 1920s and was at first thought of as an arrangement of the D major Flute Concerto. However, experts now believe that the Oboe Concerto is the original composition and the Flute Concerto was an arrangement.<sup>54</sup> Now the Mozart Oboe Concerto has quickly become one of the most frequently requested solo works for auditions and the most performed concerto for oboe in the repertoire.

Mozart wrote this concerto with oboist Giuseppe Ferlendis in mind, who worked in the Salzburg Orchestra; however it soon became a favorite piece of oboist Friedrich Ramm of the Mannheim orchestra. After being shown the score by Mozart in the winter of 1777, Ramm soon achieved great success performing the work, making it his so-called *cheval de bataille* or war horse.<sup>55</sup>

Most well-known for his operas, Mozart often used elements of his operatic style in other works. The Oboe Concerto is no exception to this rule. Arranged in a typical fast-slow-fast formation, the piece features expressive and elegant melodies that evoke arias sung center stage. The first movement, marked *Allegro aperto* (open allegro), interestingly never gives the main theme to the oboe, instead leaving the orchestra to handle this role. Taking the starring virtuoso role, the oboist floats above the ensemble with a variety of sparkling technical passages and laughing motifs. The second movement features a poignant, sophisticated tune to rival any of Mozart's arias, letting the oboe take

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> W.A. Mozart, *Oboe Concerto in C Major, K. 314*, (London: Hawkes & Son, Ltd., 1948), preface by Bernhard Paumgartner, iii.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

the lead throughout the movement while the orchestra remains in a strictly supportive role. The third movement takes the form of a Rondo, trading folk-like melodies between the orchestra and soloist; jovial and buoyant, the soloist and orchestra bound forward together towards the ecstatic conclusion.

Sunday, April 10, 2016, 2 p.m.

#### **PROGRAM**

Sonata in G minor, BWV 1030b (c. 1736)

[Andante]

Siciliano

Presto

J.S. Bach

(1685-1750)

"In Sleep the World is Yours" (2013)

Lullaby
Yes
Tragedy

Lori Laitman
(b. 1955)

#### -INTERMISSION-

Cinq Pièces en Trio (1935)

Allegro vivo

Andantino

(1890-1962)

Allegro assai Andante Allegro quasi marziale

Oboe Quartet in F major, K. 370 (1781) W.A. Mozart *Allegro* (1756-1791)

Adagio Rondeau

For recording purposes, please hold applause until after each set/piece and have cell phones on silent. No flash photography, Thank You!

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Oboe Performance. Ms. Sallas is a student of Dr. ToniMarie Marchioni.

# **Program Notes April 10 Recital**

J.S. Bach, Sonata in G minor, BWV 1030b (1736?)

Widely regarded as one of the greatest composers of all time, Bach was renowned primarily for his keyboard works, though his compositional output encompassed many different genres. He composed several important works featuring the oboe, including numerous prominent solos within the cantatas, the Concerto for Oboe, Violin, and Orchestra in C minor (BWV 1060), and the "Brandenburg" Concertos. Despite Bach's frequent use of the oboe, the Sonata in G minor is the only solo sonata for the instrument. This work is more widely known as the most challenging of his flute sonatas, the Sonata in B minor, BWV 1030. Sources for the G minor version include a copy of the harpsichord part in G minor without the solo part and the autographed B minor version. Most historians believe that Bach intended the solo instrument to be the oboe, primarily due to the ease the key of G minor afforded the Baroque oboe and how unnatural that key was for the Baroque flute. <sup>56</sup> On either instrument, the sonata's difficulty is clear; considerable demands are made throughout in terms of technique and endurance.

The opening movement features a flowing, though somewhat austere theme on the oboe, supported by nearly constant forward motion in the harpsichord and continuo. Between the two outer movements, an elegant and expressive *siciliano* showcases Bach's arresting chromatic harmonies, expert ornamentation, and the sweet, plaintive timbre of the oboe. The final movement consists of two related sections: a short fugue between the three voices and a thematically similar gigue. No less demanding than the first

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> J.S. Bach, *Sonata in G minor, BWV 1030b*, (Frankfurt: C.F. Peters, 2000), preface by Raymond Meylan.

movement, both the fugue and gigue require immense control and technical facility, though the feeling is one of joyful abandon driving towards the final cadence.

Lori Laitman, "In Sleep the World is Yours" (2013)

Described as "one of the most talented and intriguing of living composers" by Fanfare Magazine, Lori Laitman has a particular talent for vocal works, having composed more than 250 songs and multiple operatic and choral works. Her compositional output includes several unique works written to commemorate the Holocaust: among them are her best known vocal work I Never Saw Another Butterfly (1994) which features poetry written by children in the Terezin concentration camp, and the more recent song cycle In Sleep the World Is Yours (2013). Scored for soprano, oboe, and piano, this work sets poetry written by Selma Meerbaum-Eisinger, a young Romanian girl who lived during the Holocaust.

For this song cycle, Laitman sets three of Selma's poems: *Lullaby*, *Yes*, and *Tragedy*. Oboe and voice remain equal partners throughout, and the combined timbres are uniquely suited to the dark and dramatic mood of the poetry. A flowing chordal accompaniment in *Lullaby* suggests a serene evening scene, with the oboe often gently echoing the tranquil vocal melody. *Yes* shifts between a turbulent, chromatic piano line and intense interjections in the oboe to a more joyous, graceful section with the voice soaring above the instrumental accompaniment. Darkest in tone of the three movements, *Tragedy* opens with a striking and foreboding oboe and piano duet, eventually leading to an agitated, restless mixed meter section marking the vocal entrance. After a return to the opening, the piano shifts to recall motives from the middle movement before ending

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> Lori Laitman, *Biography*, accessed April 23, 2017, http://artsongs.com/biography.

somberly with the lone solo voice. *In Sleep the World is Yours* was commissioned by Music of Remembrance and premiered on May 12, 2014 at Benaroya Hall, Seattle, WA.

Jacques Ibert, Cinq Pièces en Trio (1935)

Twentieth century French composer Jacques Ibert wrote music that often avoided specific categorization, encompassing everything from rich romanticism to lighthearted humor. He frequently employs brilliant and colorful writing for wind instruments in his works, and this short trio is no exception. The specific combination of oboe, clarinet, and bassoon was primarily developed by the Trio d'Anches de Paris (Paris Reed Trio). Nearly all the works written for the newly devised reed trio in the 1920s and 1930s were inspired by or specifically written for this group. Bassoonist Fernand Oubradous, a member of the Trio d'Anches de Paris, is the dedicatee of Ibert's work *Cinq Pièces en Trio*. <sup>58</sup>

A cheerful and vivid piece, it consists of five short movements organized in a palindrome, with the first and fifth movements marked as *Allegro* in 2/4, the second and fourth marked *Andantino* and *Andante* in 3/4, and the central movement marked *Allegro* assai in 6/8. Ibert's eclectic compositional style is exemplified in these miniatures by his artful combination of neo-classical and impressionistic characteristics.

The first movement features an emphatically cheerful oboe melody accompanied by bubbling and energetic eighth notes. A graceful duet between the oboe and clarinet begins the second movement, eventually merging with the bassoon to create an introspective, somewhat pastoral mood. Opening with solo clarinet, the third movement is a brisk and compact minuet in 6/8, punctuated by clever imitation between the oboe

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> Jacqueline Therese Bretz, "The Reed Trio: Analysis of Works by Ibert, Francaix and Schreiner with a Representative Repertoire List." Order No. 3673296, The Ohio State University, 2013. http://ezproxy.uky.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.uky.edu/docview/1647740332?accountid=11836. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.

and bassoon. Thoughtful and intricate, the fourth movement features simple motives passed between all three instruments to create a musical kaleidoscope. The final movement is an energetic, humorous collage, filled with near constant motion and dense textures. Though marked *quasi marziale* (almost martial), there is little to suggest a true march in this witty, spirited finale.

# W.A. Mozart, Oboe Quartet in F major, K. 370 (1781)

One of the most legendary composers of all time, Mozart's shadow stretches across countless aspects of modern popular culture, more than 200 years past his lifetime. His music maintains an important place in the standard repertoire of nearly every instrument today and finds regular use in competitions and educational settings. Despite deceptively simple melodies, intricate craftsmanship gives his music a perilous transparency that can quickly reveal any flaws in performance. Though Mozart composed in all genres, he particularly excelled as an operatic composer, and his instrumental works frequently exhibit a charming and elegant vocal quality; the *Quartet in F major for oboe and strings*, K.370 is one such work.

Originally written for Friedrich Ramm, a renowned oboist of Mozart's day, the piece was intended to feature his sensitive, dramatic playing and remarkable technique.<sup>59</sup> Though billed as a quartet, the oboist is frequently presented in the role of a concerto soloist. Mozart was in the midst of composing his opera *Idomeneo* when the quartet was completed, and a noticeable operatic inspiration can be heard in the aria-like slow movement in D minor. Only 37 measures long, it nevertheless contains some of the most beautiful and expressive writing for oboe in the repertoire and, much like a concerto, calls

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> W.A. Mozart, *Quartet in F major for oboe and strings, K. 370*, (Kassel: Barenreiter-Verlag Karl Vötterle GmbH & Co. KG, 2009), preface by Jaroslav Pohanka, translated by Brian Jeffrey.

for a short cadenza near the end. An energetic first movement features impressive technical passages and an extraordinary range for the solo oboe; primarily accompanimental strings often shift to feature the violin in important musical ways. The final movement has a rustic, pastoral feel that is enhanced by folk-like melodies and occasional string drones that mimic bagpipes. This movement also features a startling passage of rhythmic conflict — highly unusual for this era — where the oboe wanders through scales in 4/4 time while the strings continue on in a steady 6/8.

Monday, November 28, 2016, 8 p.m.

#### **PROGRAM**

Sonata in A minor for Flute solo, Wq 132 (1747)

Poco Adagio

C.P.E. Bach (1714-1788)

Allegro Allegro

Piri for solo oboe (1971)

Isang Yun (1917-1995)

*Morceau de Salon*, Op. 228 (1859)

J.W. Kalliwoda (1801-1866)

#### -INTERMISSION-

Les Folies d'Espagne (1701)

Marin Marais (1656-1728)

Sonata for Oboe and Piano (1927)

Allegretto grazioso

Andantino espressivo

Allegro giocoso

York Bowen (1884-1961)

For recording purposes, please hold applause until after each set/piece and have cell phones on silent. No flash photography. Thank You!

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Doctor of Musical Arts degree. Ms. Sallas is a student of Dr. ToniMarie Marchioni.

# Program Notes, November 28 Recital

C.P.E. Bach, Sonata in A minor for Flute solo, Wq 132 (1747)

An important transitional figure between the Baroque and Classical style periods, C.P.E. Bach was the second oldest son of legendary Baroque composer J.S. Bach. The music of C.P.E. Bach, primarily associated with the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century musical style *empfindsamer stil* ("tender" style), features extreme changes in moods, sudden shifts of register, instability of key areas, and a frequent use of chromaticism. His *Sonata in A minor for Flute solo* (Wq 132), written around 1747 and published nearly twenty years later in 1763, was his only flute work published during his lifetime. Much like his father J.S. Bach's *Partita in A minor* (BWV 1013), this solo sonata is now considered one of the most important solo flute works of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>60</sup>

The work features three movements, a *Poco Adagio* and two different *Allegro* movements. Though still rooted in the traditions of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, C.P.E. Bach frequently evokes a sensitive, almost romantic expressiveness with an extensive use of chromaticism and unusual key relationships, and extremely unusual applications of silence, even interrupting and delaying the resolution of a phrase. His contrapuntal writing often creates the illusion of as many as three voices sounding simultaneously with only one solo instrument. Though a staple of modern day flutists' repertoire, this solo sonata lends itself relatively well to the oboe, particularly in the long lyrical lines of the slow movement and in some of the brilliant and sparkling passagework in the two *Allegro* movements. The powerful low register of the oboe as compared to the flute and the differences in articulations found between the two instruments create some challenges for

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> C.P.E. Bach, *Sonata in A minor for Flute solo, Wq. 132*, (Kassel: Bärenreiter-Verlag Karl Vötterle GmbH & Co. KG, 1986, epilogue by Manfred Harras, translated by Gabriele Thalmann.

the oboist willing to tackle this great work. Even so, the end result is compelling on either instrument.

# Isang Yun, *Piri* for solo oboe (1971)

Korean composer Isang Yun's Piri for solo oboe draws its inspiration from a number of unique sources; the Korean "oboe" called a "p'iri," the Eastern philosophy of Taoism, and his own *Hauptklangtechnik* (main tone technique).<sup>61</sup> His music is often seen as a synthesis between Eastern philosophies and sound worlds with standard Western techniques. The Korean instrument p'iri is thought to represent the human soul and its playing technique is characterized by frequent ornamentations and pitch bends surrounding the main pitches. Yun's main tone technique relates to this traditional style by centering on a few main pitches, surrounding these notes with written out ornamentation. He uses extended techniques in an attempt to evoke an Eastern sound scape with a traditionally Western instrument. The Western oboe must make use of pitch bends, glissandi, and double trills, among other unusual techniques. Another powerful undercurrent of this piece is in Yun's affinity for Taoism. This Eastern religion maintains that there are four main elements: human, earth, sky, and Tao. Tao – literally translated as "the way" – represents the flow of the universe that unites all things and flows through all things. In this tradition, a composer does not write music; he uncovers what already exists. When the performer begins playing *Piri*, they are making audible what has always been ringing, and the music will continue to ring unheard when they finish.

Organized into four continuous "movements," *Piri* opens with an expansive first movement characterized by long held notes and pitch bends, gradually increasing in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> Walter-Wolfang Sparrer, *Programme Note: Yun, Isang: Piri (1971) for solo oboe (or clarinet)*, accessed April 23, 2017, https://www.boosey.com/cr/music/Isang-Yun-Piri/3516.

speed through the next two movements. The end of the third movement features a free form section of long glissandi, which leads into the final movement. Marked *slowly*, *mysteriously*, the final section consists primarily of whole notes with fermatas, meant to be realized by the performer. In this case, the pitches have been represented with a unique combination of multiphonics – notes where as many as four or five pitches can sound simultaneously – applied at will. Ending almost inaudibly, the final movement represents a prayer as the music is given back to the universe.

# J. W. Kalliwoda, *Morceau de Salon*, Op. 228 (1859)

One of the few examples of romantic era music for solo oboe, Kalliwoda's *Morceau de Salon* has earned a favored place in the modern oboist's repertoire. Early romantic Czech composer Johann Wenzel Kalliwoda, though not particularly well-known today, was highly prolific and admired by many of his contemporaries, including Robert Schumann. Kalliwoda began composing at age 10 and he made his debut as a violinist at age 14. After studying at the Prague Conservatory, he eventually joined the Prague Opera Orchestra. He spent more than 40 years as court composer, writing music for the court and church in a variety of genres.<sup>62</sup>

His music is frequently described as having great melodic appeal and rhythmic energy, as well as a sense of humor and charm. The flashy and fun *Morceau de Salon* is no exception. After a stormy, agitated opening section, Kalliwoda introduces a pleasant and stylish two part theme which becomes the catalyst for some contrasting variations. Eventually, this material leads back to a return of the opening section and drives towards the showy finish with an impressive display of range and technique. Throughout, the

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>62</sup> J.W. Kalliwoda, *Morceau de Salon, Opus* 228, (England: Nova Music, 1994), preface.

melodies are elegant and satisfying with a hint of flirtatious energy and just enough flash to keep them continually exciting.

Marin Marais, Les Folies d'Espagne (1701)

French composer Marin Marais is best known as a master of the viol, and the leading writer of music for the instrument during his time. Most of his compositions were for the viol, including five books of suites with basso continuo accompaniment, though he also wrote four operas and some other works. He studied composition with famous opera composer Jean-Baptiste Lully and worked as a musician for the royal court at Versailles for nearly fifty years. Marais' Les Folies d'Espagne is perhaps his best-known work and comes from a book titled Second Book of Pieces for the Viol (1701).<sup>63</sup> In France, Les Folies d'Espagne referred to a specific melody and chord progression thought to be one of the oldest melodic themes on record. Often this melody was used in compositions that used a theme and variation structure. Marais' version of Les Folies d'Espagne is structured in this way also, consisting of 32 variations—called couplets with the first as the theme. Though originally conceived for a string instrument, Marais intended for this piece to be playable on a wide variety of other instruments, as he noted in a preface to the book. The work can be performed solo or with various types of accompaniment.

Frequently played by flutists, *Les Folies d'Espagne* is equally suited to the modern day oboe. An extensive theme and variations, the work allows for great individuality in performance, as a performer may choose any combination of the short couplets that they desire, creating a variety of interpretations. The main theme is

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>63</sup> Marin Marais, *Les Folies d'Espagne*, (Paris: Éditions Musicales Alphonse Leduc, 1978), preface by Jean-Claude Veilhan.

reminiscent of a slow dance in three, with a characteristic emphasis on beats one and three in each bar. Many of the variations are also dance-like in nature, including a *siciliano* pattern and a rustic, peasant dance. Though united in thematic material, each of the couplets is unique, characterized by variety in articulations, rhythms, tempi, and dynamics. It is common for the performer to repeat the theme after the final couplet is played, thereby giving structure to the variations and indicating the end of the piece.

# York Bowen, Sonata for Oboe and Piano (1927)

Dedicated to the great British oboist Leon Goosens, York Bowen's *Sonata for Oboe and Piano* was written in 1927. British composer Bowen, a virtuoso pianist, was on the faculty of the Royal Academy of Music during the same time that Leon Goosens was serving as a professor of oboe. Bowen's compositional style, more in line with the romantic composers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century than with the modernists of his own time, would have sounded rather old-fashioned to his contemporaries, but complimented Goosens' playing style. Despite this old-fashioned label, Bowen's *Sonata for Oboe* contains many interesting harmonies, reminiscent of jazz, and complex polyrhythms throughout. The work consists of three movements in a fast – slow – fast pattern. Each movement follows a similar three part form, with similar material in the opening and concluding sections paired with contrasting central material, with a short coda to round out each movement.

The first movement, marked *Allegretto grazioso* consists of a cheerful first theme contrasted with a more agitated, restless middle section; a short coda builds increasing

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> Mary Lindsey Campbell Bailey, "Léon Goossens's Impact on Twentieth-Century English Oboe Repertoire: "Phantasy Quartet" of Benjamin Britten, Concerto for Oboe and Strings of Ralph Vaughan Williams, and Sonata for Oboe of York Bowen." Order No. 3419942, University of Cincinnati, 2010. http://ezproxy.uky.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.uky.edu/docview/756888884?account id=11836. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.

excitement before settling into a sweet, expressive conclusion. The middle movement, marked *Andantino espressivo* is marked by a sighing gesture and frequent imitation between the piano and oboe. Opening lyricism contrasts with the middle section marked *appassionato*, returning to the opening section and ending with a short coda. The final movement, *Allegro giocoso*, is a technical tour de force with a jovial mood. An exciting opening section is contrasted with a more lyrical middle section containing echoes of the second movement. After a return to the opening material, the music drives relentlessly towards a final flourish from the oboe in a jubilant and soaring conclusion.

# **PROGRAM**

#### THE AMERICAN OBOE

Pastorale, for oboe and piano, Op. 38 (1949)

Howard Hanson (1896-1981)

The Winter's Passed (1940)

Wayne Barlow (1912-1996)

Canzonetta for Oboe and String Orchestra (posth.)

Samuel Barber (1910-1981)

For recording purposes, please hold applause until after each set/piece and have cell phones on silent. No flash photography. Thank You!

This lecture recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Doctor of Musical Arts degree. Ms. Sallas is a student of Dr. ToniMarie Marchioni.

### **Lecture Recital: The American Oboe**

We study an art which is a part of infinity itself. It is tangible, it is intangible. It is science, it is art. It is emotion, it is intellect. It is a part of society, yet it carries us to heights where we exist for a moment in the fearful and awesome isolation of interplanetary space. It calls for our deepest emotional development, the greatest use of our intellectual powers and a supreme devotion to beauty.<sup>65</sup>

So stated American composer Howard Hanson at an Eastman School of Music Convocation in 1936. He believed that at its core, music should be beautiful and should move the audience, no matter the form it might take. In many ways, this was a controversial position for a composer in twentieth century America. Discussions of American music of this time often begin by focusing either on the desire to create a distinctly "American" style of concert music or on the innovative, radical ideas leading to the development of new, modern styles like the twelve-tone style. The so-called "crisis of tonality" at the turn of the century maintained that traditional nineteenth century tonality had reached the limit of its potential, and the only way forward was to explore radical new paths.

A move away from music that was deemed "beautiful" in a traditional sense began to take root, and a disconnect between audiences and composers was growing.

Milton Babbitt's famous 1958 article "Who Cares if You Listen?" exemplifies this growing chasm in the public sphere. Babbitt felt that so-called "serious" or "advanced" music—like studies in advanced mathematics, philosophy, or physics—could not be

<sup>65</sup> John Gladney Proffitt. "Howard Hanson, *An American Romantic*." Liner notes for *Howard Hanson: An American Romantic*. Albany Records TR129, 1994, CD.

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understood by the average person without special preparation. 66 Those composers that continued to use a basically traditionalist tonal language and still embraced the standard forms of the nineteenth century were often viewed with a certain amount of disdain and even contempt. The popularity and mass appeal of their works often became a reason for proponents of the new, modernist styles to dismiss them outright. These composers known as "neo-romantics" due to their works' numerous shared characteristics with music of the Romantic era—wrote music that was expressive and tonally adventurous, while still adhering to the musical traditions of the nineteenth century. They did not share the idea that tonality had reached its limit. Howard Hanson, Wayne Barlow, and Samuel Barber, the three composers discussed in this lecture, all belong to this category. Often deemed less important than their more experimental colleagues by critics, they wrote music which borrowed heavily from European musical traditions and harmonic structures found in the Romantic era, utilized American folk songs as inspiration, and sometimes even adapted influences from jazz and popular music. These composers did care about the connection between performer, audience, and composer, and their music was intended to appeal to the audiences on an emotional and spiritual level. They wanted audiences to leave performances feeling fulfilled.

Composer Howard Hanson was an enthusiastic advocate and promoter of American music and composers all his life. As the president of the famed Eastman School of Music for forty years, Hanson was responsible for turning this school into the prestigious institution it is today. The performances he conducted and recordings produced with the Eastman ensembles were instrumental in furthering the careers of his

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>66</sup> Milton Babbitt. "Who Cares if You Listen?" High Fidelity (Feb. 1958), 40.

contemporaries and other American composers that followed him, including Wayne Barlow and Samuel Barber. He was responsible for establishing an annual Festival of American Music and a recording series with the Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra called "Music for Quiet Listening." Hanson made a conscious effort to conduct and record brand new as well as previously heard works from contemporary American composers. As a working composer himself, he understood firsthand the business value in recordings and in multiple performances of new works. In addition to his advocacy for American classical music and work as an educator, he is also known for his 1960 theory book *Harmonic Materials of Modern Music: Resources of the Tempered Scale*, which laid the foundations of what is known today as musical set theory. His belief that music should always be beautiful and connect with its audience comes through in his decidedly neo-Romantic style. <sup>67</sup> His works are heavily influenced by the Romantic era, and though frequently chromatic and harmonically complex, they are undeniably beautiful.

Hanson's best-known work is probably his Symphony No. 2 ("The Romantic"), commissioned for the  $50^{th}$  anniversary of the Boston Symphony in 1930. The lyrical theme from the first movement was famously used in the closing credits of the film *Alien* without the composer's permission, <sup>69</sup> and later the work inspired John Williams's music for the film *E.T.* <sup>70</sup> Its lyrical theme is also known as the "Interlochen Theme" due to the

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> John Gladney Proffitt. "Howard Hanson, *An American Romantic*." Liner notes for *Howard Hanson: An American Romantic*. Albany Records TR129, 1994, CD.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> Kenneth C. Viant, "Symphony No. 2, Op. 30 (Romantic)." Program notes for Canton Symphony Orchestra, https://www.cantonsymphony.org/441. Accessed April 1, 2017.

Allen Cohen, Howard Hanson in Theory and Practice. (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2004), 24-25.
 Fred Karlin, Listening to Movies: The Film Lover's Guide to Music. (New York: Schirmer Books, 1994),
 6.

now traditional place it holds at the conclusion of concerts at the *Interlochen Center for* the Arts.<sup>71</sup>

Hanson's *Pastorale for Oboe and Piano* bears the inscription "To Peggie," <sup>72</sup> a dedication to his wife. Originally commissioned by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) for the 1949 conference in Paris, the *Pastorale for Oboe and Piano* was later arranged for oboe, strings, and harp. This orchestral version was premiered in 1950 by legendary oboist Marcel Tabuteau and the Philadelphia Orchestra with Eugene Ormandy conducting.

Written in a single-movement, rhapsodic style, the work opens with a haunting and melancholy unaccompanied tune in the oboe. Altered scales and chromatic harmonies give the piece an exotic character, and the plaintive oboe is perfectly suited to the reflective, searching mood. Moments of heart wrenching beauty contrast with dramatic, almost violent outbursts and often shift to new ideas with little warning. Even though some of the harmonies sound extremely chromatic, the chords are typically based on traditional triadic harmony. For example, in measure 14 in the piano shown in Figure 1.1, the alternating chords sound very dissonant but are actually just C-sharp minor and B-sharp minor triads in root position.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> Allen Cohen, *Howard Hanson in Theory and Practice*, (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2004), 24.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> Howard Hanson, *Pastorale, Op. 38. Solos for Oboe: 30 Repertoire Pieces with Piano Accompaniment.* Compiled and Edited by Nancy Clauter. (New York: Carl Fischer, LLC, 2006), 88.

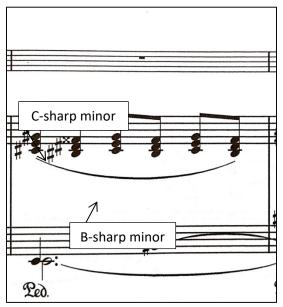


Figure 1.1 Pastorale for Oboe and Piano, Op. 38 by Howard Hanson, mm. 14. Copyright ©1952 by Carl Fischer, LLC. This edition copyright ©2006. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

Figure 1.2 below shows measures 98 and 99, where a series of dissonant sounding chords occurs, consisting of D-sharp minor, E-minor, and F-sharp minor triads all in root position.

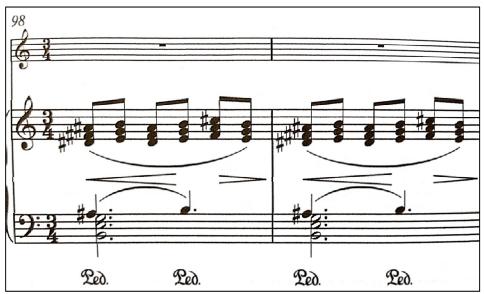


Figure 1.2 *Pastorale for Oboe and Piano, Op. 38* by Howard Hanson, mm. 98-99. Copyright ©1952 by Carl Fischer, LLC. This edition copyright ©2006. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

Hanson also uses exotic scales to form the basis for some of the extreme moments of tension in the piece. In the oboe melody beginning in measure 77, an octatonic scale is outlined—which will become the basis for one of the most intense emotional sections of the piece—from there until measure 88. Figure 1.3 below shows this exotic scale.



Figure 1.3 Octatonic Scale Example

The oboe melody from measures 77 through 79 consists of the notes from the above scale, as shown in the score in Figure 1.4 below.

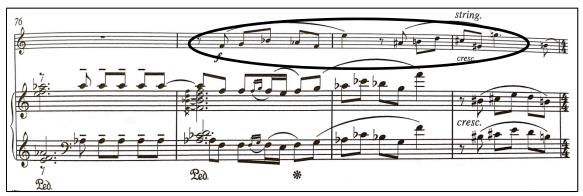


Figure 1.4 Pastorale for Oboe and Piano, Op. 38 by Howard Hanson, mm. 76-79. Copyright ©1952 by Carl Fischer, LLC. This edition copyright ©2006. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

The piano begins to pick up the octatonic scale in answer to the oboe line in measure 79, and continues to reiterate it in the next few measures. Finally, the scale is directly outlined in octaves in measures 83 and 84, shown in Figure 1.5.

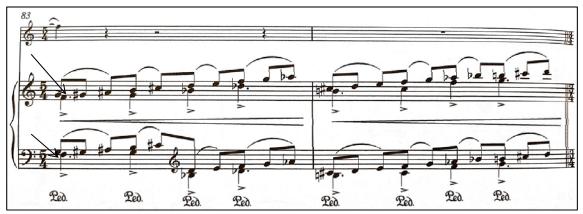


Figure 1.5 Pastorale for Oboe and Piano, Op. 38 by Howard Hanson, mm. 83-84. Copyright ©1952 by Carl Fischer, LLC. This edition copyright ©2006. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

The dissonant moments in this piece, like the ones shown above, are balanced out by moments of calming beauty that somehow bring to mind the open plains of middle America and wide blue skies. Not terribly unusual, as Hanson actually grew up in Nebraska, a place where such sights would have been common. In fact, when we think of so-called "American music" these are somehow the sounds that come to mind. So what is it that gives this sensation of space? What often occurs in the music itself is an abundance of open fourths and fifths, wide spacing of chords, melodies doubled in octaves, and so-called "tall chords," or chords built on triads with notes added beyond the seventh. For example, the chord the coda is built around in measure 101 is one such "tall chord," shown here in Figure 1.6.

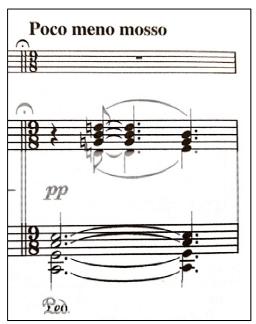


Figure 1.6 Pastorale for Oboe and Piano, Op. 38 by Howard Hanson, mm. 101. Copyright ©1952 by Carl Fischer, LLC. This edition copyright ©2006. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

This chord goes up past the seventh to include a ninth. Wide spacing of chords can be seen in the opening of the *Pastorale* as well, in measure 4 and in measure 6 of the piano's bass line, shown in Figure 1.7 below.

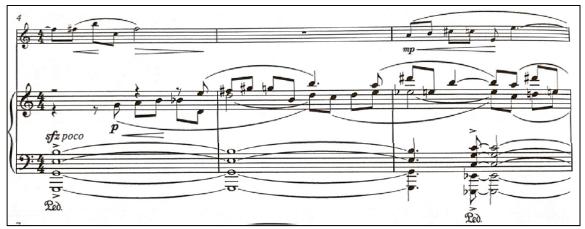


Figure 1.7 Pastorale for Oboe and Piano, Op. 38 by Howard Hanson, mm. 4-6. Copyright ©1952 by Carl Fischer, LLC. This edition copyright ©2006. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

These characteristics are found throughout Hanson's music and in other works discussed within this lecture.

Wayne Barlow was a student and colleague of Howard Hanson at the Eastman School of Music, where he taught music theory and composition, directed the Electronic Music Studio, and served as Dean of Graduate Studies. Due to Hanson's support of new American music, many of Barlow's works were performed by the Eastman ensembles and conducted by Hanson himself. One of Barlow's best known works, "The Winter's Passed" for oboe and strings, was premiered by the Eastman ensemble and appeared on one of Howard Hanson's famed *Music for Quiet Listening* recordings. Barlow was awarded a Ph.D. in music composition in 1937, making him the first person in the United States to receive that particular degree. The American characteristics found in Wayne Barlow's music often come from the use of folk songs as source material, as is the case in "The Winter's Passed," along with a distinctly tonal and romantically influenced harmonic language.

When discussing American folk songs though, can they really be called quintessentially American? What one actually discovers with many American folk songs are origins that lie in Europe, typically Scotland, England, or Ireland. It is appropriate then that the music viewed as truly American is actually shown to borrow influences from a wide variety of sources, European and otherwise and adapt them to satisfy its own purposes. American classical music then is reflective of the melting pot of cultures that is a point of pride for numerous Americans still today.

Barlow uses two traditional folk songs as inspirational material in this work: "Black is the Color (Of My True Love's Hair)" and "The Wayfaring Stranger." The

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> "Wayne Barlow," Eastman School of Music. Accessed 1 April, 2017,

https://www.esm.rochester.edu/about/portraits/barlow/.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> "Program Notes: Evocations of Time and Space," Boston Classical Orchestra. Accessed April 1, 2017, http://www.bostonclassicalorchestra.org:80/prognotes/06-07notes-prog1.html.

first of these tunes is thought to have originated in Scotland due to some of the lyrics stating: "I go to the Clyde to mourn and weep." The River Clyde is the second longest river in Scotland, flowing through the major city of Glasgow. It was initially collected and documented by musicologist Cecil Arnold in 1916 during a trip to North Carolina, and later included in his 1917 collection English Folk Songs of the Southern Appalachias. 76 One of the great collectors and interpreters of Appalachian folk music, John Jacob Niles—whom you may also know for his hauntingly beautiful Christmas carol I Wonder as I Wander—heard the tune in its original version while travelling to catalogue American folk music in the 1930s. At his father's request, Niles rewrote the melody and later included it on his 1941 album John Jacob Niles American Folk Songs. It is this version that went on to become the most well-known today<sup>77</sup>. However, Wayne Barlow uses the original version of this tune in "The Winter's Passed," written the year before Niles's album was released. Irish folk singer Christy Moore sings an acoustic cover of the original version of this tune on the live recorded album, *Live at the Point.* 78 John Jacob Niles takes this original version and alters the ending to give the song a modal sound in his recording from 1941, which can be found on the album I Wonder as I *Wander: Carols and Love Songs* from Everest Records.<sup>79</sup>

The second folk song, "The Wayfaring Stranger," likely had its origins in the Southern Appalachian mountains around the time of the American Revolution, an area

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> Tom Schnadel, "Black is the Color: Unusual Song, Interesting History," Tom Schnabel's Rhythm Planet, KCRW, Santa Monica, CA: KCRW, March 13, 2015. Accessed April 1, 2017, https://www.kcrw.com/music/shows/tom-schnabels-rhythm-planet/black-is-the-color-unusual-song-

interesting-history.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> Christy Moore, *Live at the Point*, Christy Moore. Columbia B0000DJK22, 1994, CD.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> John Jacob Niles, *I Wonder as I Wander: Carols and Love Songs*, John Jacob Niles. Everest Records B000CCBC58, 2009, CD.

that was home to immigrants from England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. There is some debate about the earliest printing of this tune, but it was likely first published between the late 1800s and early 1900s, possibly included in early *Sacred Harp* editions. Also known as "Poor Wayfaring Stranger," this popular folk song has been covered numerous times, taking on the characteristics of various different musical styles. Detailing an anonymous, plaintive character journeying through life, the lyrics and melody have great universal appeal. American singer Burl Ives made this tune one of his signature songs, even styling himself as "The Wayfaring Stranger." He titled his autobiography and early 1940s radio program "The Wayfaring Stranger," and included the song on a 1944 album of the same name. This version of the tune can also be found on numerous collections of American folk music, including the 1989 album *Folk Classics* (*Roots of American Folk Music*) released by Columbia Records. 2

Wayne Barlow uses these two songs as the basis for this piece, modifying the rhythm and altering some of the underlying harmonies. "Black is the Color" is changed into a major mode and has altered rhythms, though it remains easily recognizable. Figure 2.1 below shows the initial appearance of this folk tune in the music.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>80</sup> Steve Rouse, "Program Note," Manhattan Beach Music. Accessed April 1, 2017, http://www.manhattanbeachmusic.com/html/wayfaring stranger.html.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>81</sup> John F. Garst, "Poor Wayfaring Stranger'—Early Publications," *The Hymn*, Volume 31-32 (1980-81), 97. Accessed April 1, 2017, https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.b3563659.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>82</sup> Various Artists, *Folk Classics (Roots of American Folk Music)*, Burl Ives, Columbia B0000026RC, 1989, CD.

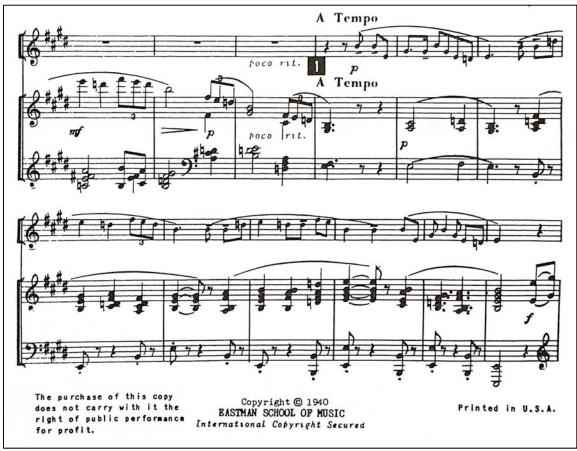


Figure 2.1 *The Winter's Passed* by Wayne Barlow, mm. 10-18. Copyright ©1940 by Carl Fischer, LLC. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

"The Wayfaring Stranger" keeps its original tune as well, but the rhythm and meter are modified significantly and the tempo is increased, evoking a very different character than the traditional folk song. Figure 2.2 below shows this version of the tune as used in the middle section of Barlow's work.



Figure 2.2 *The Winter's Passed* by Wayne Barlow, mm. 46-61. Copyright ©1940 by Carl Fischer, LLC. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.

Barlow's work is meant to represent the transition from winter into spring, where spring has come and the winter has passed. He uses the folk songs separately and intertwined throughout the work, and they remain easily discerned by the listener in performance.

The final composer discussed here is Samuel Barber. Often grouped with the neoromantics, Barber was one of the most popular and frequently performed composers of the twentieth century. Rarely participating in the experimental trends and procedures of his contemporaries, Barber only used these new techniques when they did not interfere with his straight-forward tonality and lyricism. Barber's works are characterized by a penchant for vocal lyricism and a traditional nineteenth century sense of tonality. An accomplished and talented singer himself, Barber wrote extraordinarily well for the voice, and his numerous songs remain popular with vocalists today. His vocal style translated perfectly for orchestral instruments like the oboe and English horn, whose characteristic timbres mimic the qualities found in the human voice with remarkable accuracy. Unlike many other composers, Samuel Barber achieved an early and sudden popularity which continued on through most of his career. The success of his *Overture to* "The School for Scandal" and the Adagio for Strings made him extremely well-known and beloved by the American public, probably due to his accessible and melodically driven style; this was highly appealing to American audiences that often did not understand or enjoy new avant-garde trends.

"I like to give my best themes to the oboe," said Samuel Barber. <sup>83</sup> Appropriately, after a long and illustrious career full of varied vocal and orchestral works, Barber's final composition was a planned oboe concerto, which was never fully completed. Barber began work on the piece soon after finishing the Third Essay for Orchestra, completing the middle movement of the new work in the fall and winter of 1978. He began with this lyrical slow movement in part because writing long, elegant melodies came easiest to him. When he was diagnosed with cancer, it soon became clear that he would not be able to finish the piece. Barber knew that what he had written could stand on its own as an

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>83</sup> Samuel Barber, *Canzonetta for Oboe and String Orchestra*, Oboe and Piano, (New York: G. Schirmer, Inc., 1993).

Barber's longtime friend and former student Charles Turner would later orchestrate the piece in October of 1981. He writes about the work in the Schirmer edition for oboe and piano saying, "In this *Canzonetta* we find the form of Sam's life imitating that of his art by making a simple final statement and farewell." Like Turner, many people view this piece as Samuel Barber's own elegy, as he knew that he was dying while composing it.

One of the key features of Barber's musical style is the dichotomy between pieces like *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* and "Sure on This Shining Night" with those like the Piano Sonata and *Andromache's Farewell*; the former mostly simple and unadorned, while the latter feature extreme chromaticism. A unique feature of the *Canzonetta* is the blending and intermingling of these two contrasting styles within the same melodic and developmental material; one simple, meandering melodic line runs throughout the piece, trading between a strictly diatonic version and a highly chromatic and rhythmically transformed version.<sup>85</sup>

For such a pleasant, inoffensive work, the *Canzonetta* has managed to surround itself with a certain amount of controversy. Before the work's premiere with the New York Philharmonic, oboist Harold Gomberg—for whom the work was written—made a few subtle changes to the part during rehearsals and brought a cadenza which Barber had written for him. Barber's student Charles Turner who prepared the work for publication apparently felt this was a misrepresentation of the composer's true intentions, and

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>85</sup> John Corigliano, "'Canzonetta' for Oboe and String Orchestra, Op. 48 (Posth.)," *New York Philharmonic*, 19, http://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/7bd62608-ea13-4b77-9ce8-1ae2f0521995/fullview#page/2/mode/2up.

actually called *The New York Times* to complain about the changes. <sup>86</sup> The original version was restored for the premiere performance, although Gomberg did play Barber's cadenza, apparently against Turner's wishes. It seems odd though that Turner would complain about the cadenza's insertion, as Barber himself wrote it to go with the piece at its premiere.

Turner chose not to include Barber's cadenza in the published version of the work, for reasons that remain unclear. At this time, the only performance of this work to include Barber's original cadenza appears to be the premiere, currently contained in the recording archives of the New York Philharmonic. In yet another interesting twist, the original recording of this premiere appears to have been mislabeled by the record company, and at the moment eludes detection. The author is currently working on this problem and hopes to locate the original recording soon. In the meantime, other recordings of the Canzonetta either leave out the cadenza entirely or include only a repeat of the first few bars, totaling approimately ten or fifteen seconds for the whole cadenza. When first examining this problem with the cadenza, a short and simple route as described above seems appropriate. After all, the piece runs only eight minutes long, so it could be deemed inappropriate to include an overly long cadenza. With the first option of leaving out the cadenza entirely, the piece can sound somehow incomplete; the second option of just repeating the first few measures works as well, but can seem harmonically out of place. The above options are typical of what is heard on most recordings. 87 But the question remains: what were Barber's true intentions with the cadenza for this work?

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>86</sup> Barbara Heyman, *Samuel Barber: The Composer and His Music*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 507.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>87</sup> For detailed musical examples of these options, see pages 47-51 of this document.

Famed Barber historian Dr. Barbara Heyman includes a list of available manuscripts along with their locations for each of Barber's works in her recent thematic catalogue. From consulting this book that the original cadenza was contained in two places: inserted into an earlier unpublished version of the manuscript housed at the Library of Congress and in Dr. Heyman's private collection. Dr. Heyman was kind enough to help the author locate the cadenza and to provide a copy to use for research. Barber's estate gave permisions to transcribe the handwritten insert for educational purposes, and it is included in Part 1 of this document for closer inspection.<sup>88</sup> Interestingly, Barber's own cadenza is much more complex than what performers typically include, and contains more dynamics, articulations, and passagework than much of the rest of the piece.

It might be that the cadenza is an indication of what the rest of the concerto might have been like, but there is no way now to be certain. At the author's request for Dr. Heyman gave her opinion on the cadenza and whether or not Barber would have wanted it played, saying: "Barber wrote that cadenza for Gomberg and I believe he would have put it in the Schirmer edition had he lived long enough to take control of it." Taking into account Dr. Heyman's expert opinion and the appropriateness of Barber's cadenza to the harmony that precedes and follows it in this work, it is the author's belief that his cadenza should be included for performance. In spite of a frequent dismissal by critics during their time, the American neo-Romantics, like Samuel Barber, wrote music that was not only beautiful but complex and challenging for both players and audiences alike.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>88</sup> See Figure 5.9 on page 49 of this document for Barber's cadenza.

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February 22, 2017

Angela Christine Sallas 151 S. Locust Hill Dr. #1401 Lexington, KY 4517

#### RE: CANZONETTA, by Samuel Barber

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### CANZONETTA

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